

DEVELOPING OUR COMMUNITY

DEVELOPING OUR COMMUNITY

In this publication, *The Daily Reporter* explores commercial and residential projects throughout Central Ohio, looking at communities' growth and developers' achievements. This special feature is divided into multiple sectors focusing on the development of each.

CONTENTS

SECTOR 1

Columbus 3A

Downtown, Arena District, Short North,
Brewery District, German Village, Clintonville,
University District, Heritage Districts,
Italian Village, Victorian Village

SECTOR 2

Northwestern Franklin County 11A

Grandview Heights, Hilliard, Upper Arlington,
Dublin, Worthington, Northland

SECTOR 3

Northeastern Franklin County..... 15A

Bexley, Gahanna, New Albany,
Reynoldsburg, Whitehall, Westerville

SECTOR 4

Southern Franklin County 21A

Canal Winchester, Grove City,
Groveport, Pickerington

SECTOR 5

Select Communities of Contiguous Counties . . 23A

Delaware, Lancaster, London,
Marysville, Newark, Powell

DEVELOPING OUR COMMUNITY

A supplement to *The Daily Reporter*

Vice President & Publisher

Controller

Editor

Associate Editor

Section Editor

Circulation

Production

Dan L. Shillingburg

Mark McGuire

Cindy Ludlow

Chris Bailey

Jon Gingerich

Marlena Woodtke

Kelly Rabideau

THE DAILY REPORTER

580 South High Street, Suite 316, Columbus, Ohio 43215-5644

Phone: (614) 228-NEWS (6397) Fax: (614) 224-8649

E-mail: cdr@sourcenews.com

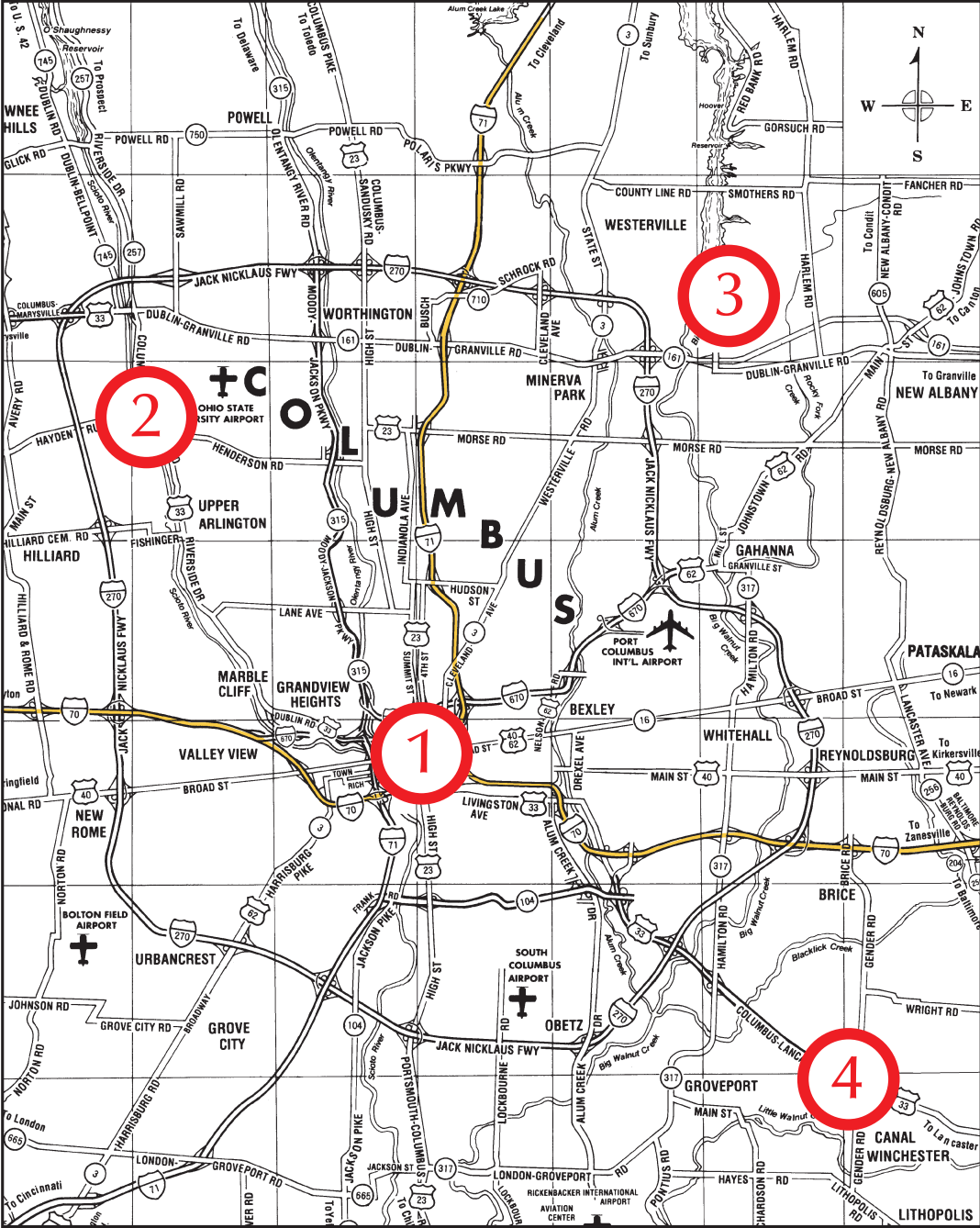
For additional copies or to advertise in future issues, contact *The Daily Reporter* at (614) 228-NEWS (6397).



©June 2004
The Daily Reporter Inc.,
all rights reserved.

Material published is for the sole and exclusive use of the subscriber. It may not be published, resold, recorded or reused in any manner, in whole or in part without the publisher's written consent.

Any infringement will be subject to legal redress.



This special feature of *The Daily Reporter* provides an overview of commercial and residential projects throughout Central Ohio.

We have divided the community into various sectors so that we can provide in-depth coverage of our major communities in the area. These sectors are:

1. Columbus
2. Northwestern Franklin County
3. Northeastern Franklin County
4. Southern Franklin County
5. Select communities of contiguous counties

COLUMBUS



Downtown Columbus

Through city initiatives, public sector, private businesses, downtown continues to grow

By JON GINGERICH
Daily Reporter Staff Writer

Anyone who isn't a complete stranger to downtown Columbus knows that the area is undergoing a development reformation.

In the last two years, residential construction in downtown Columbus housing has increased by nearly 800 percent. As of May, downtown housing accounted for a total of 2,987 units, with recent development resulting in 470 housing units opened in the area since June 2003 alone.

"Mayor (Michael) Coleman has made the future health of our downtown a priority because it is the heart of economic vitality and cultural diversity for all of Central Ohio," said Bob McLaughlin, downtown development administrator.

"The largest concentration of the region's workforce is employed downtown. The largest concentration of entertainment options is located downtown. The reemergence of new housing is a critical next step in downtown's successful revitalization."

Private investments into downtown housing development have topped \$15 million, with an additional \$11 million raised in private investment in the city's housing investment fund since August 2003.

"Housing development has really taken hold downtown, and has been especially significant in the last 18 to 24 months," McLaughlin said.

He added that the success of Columbus' recent housing initiatives are partly the result of Coleman's aggressive tax abatement program, which gives building owners competitive tax credits to create downtown housing units.

According to McLaughlin, as part of the plan, Coleman has set a goal to have some 10,000 new units in downtown by the city's bicentennial in 2012.

"There has been a sea of change in the composition of downtown Columbus. Residential housing is the cornerstone of any successful community; that's why housing is so important to downtown, and that's why the mayor had made it a key issue."

Commercial development in downtown Columbus also has taken a sharp

turn upward, boasting a 26 percent growth in property since 1995 and a 30 percent increase in jobs since 1990.

City officials said in the last three years alone, private investments for new development downtown has topped \$1.1 billion, and downtown now comprises more than 38 percent of all supply and office space in Franklin County.

This poses a stark contrast to only a few years ago, when Columbus' downtown actually had one of the highest vacancy rates in the country, which peaked at a vacancy rate of 26 percent in 2001.

In response to the declining market, Coleman introduced the Columbus Downtown Office Incentive in 2002.

The office incentive program is designed to stabilize the downtown commercial market by rewarding businesses based on the number of jobs they bring into the area.

Companies can receive half the funds their employees pay the city in income tax if they bring jobs into downtown that previously were located outside the city limits.

(See Downtown, page 6A)

Sector 1

- Downtown, Arena District, Short North, Brewery District, German Village, Clintonville, University District, Heritage Districts, Italian Village, Victorian Village

Victorian Village

Neglected oil plant to go, park to be improved

By JON GINGERICH
Daily Reporter Staff Writer

Residents of Columbus' historic Victorian Village community are looking forward to some pleasant changes in their neighborhood this summer.

The biggest news to hit the community this year was the announcement that the former A.C. Humko plant on West First Avenue in Victorian Village's adjoining Harrison West neighborhood would be demolished to make way for a 271-unit housing development.

The Ohio Department of Development recently gave the city of Columbus a \$3 million grant in Clean Ohio Funds to clean up the Humko site, which was a cooking oil refinery from 1920 until its inevitable closing in 2001.

Due to years of neglect, the plant had fallen into blight, and at best, had become little more than a reminder of the community's industrial past. At worst, it remained an eyesore for the community. Either way, area residents said they are glad to see the vacant plant removed.

"We're happy to see it go," said Pat Lewis, a 30-year member of the Victorian Village Society and vice president of the Historic Friends of Goodale Park.

"It's an ugly site, and right now, residential development would definitely be the preferred choice for the area. We're delighted they're tearing it down."

Estimated construction cost for the 13.5-acre site is said to be more than \$4 million. When completed, the housing complex could hold as many as 200 apartments, 60 condominiums, 10 single-family homes and an area park adjacent to the Olentangy River.

News of the neighborhood transformation couldn't come at a more appropriate time for the historic neighborhood.

This year marks the Victorian Village Society's 30th annual tour of village homes and gardens, and Lewis said the society is celebrating the occasion in style.

A tour of the area's most famous homes and gardens is planned for July, followed by a party at the historic Sells Mansion on the corner of Dennison Street and Buttles Avenue.

Funds raised by the tour, along with money raised by a tour the society plans to host this summer of neighborhood pools, will go toward another ambitious area development project: a fountain sculpture to be placed in the middle of the Goodale Park pond.

As Lewis explained, while Goodale Park has been a landmark in Columbus for more than 150 years, a proper sculpture has never been erected to commemorate the park or its founder.



Dr. Lincoln Goodale gave the lush, 32-acre plot of land to the city in 1851, and in the years since, it has served as an urban oasis for residents of its adjoining Victorian Village and Short North areas.

Now, the Victorian Village Society, along with the Friends of Goodale Park and the Brick Street Arts Association, has begun soliciting local artists for an opportunity to build the water-based sculpture for the park.

"There needs to be a real fountain built in Goodale Park. We feel the formation that is currently in the pond doesn't accurately represent the park or the community, and the pump system that spouts water often gets clogged," she said.

Lewis said the cost for creating the sculpture should be somewhere "in the neighborhood of \$100,000."

Lewis said the Friends of Goodale Park are looking for artists who can design a sculpture that "relates to a small, organic pond." The sculpture need not incorporate a fountain to be accepted for review, Lewis said, but should make a statement about the pond and its surrounding historic neighborhoods.

"We'll pick out the four ideas we think are the best, and go from there," she said.

Heritage Districts

\$10 million in new development underway in main corridors of Near East area, two additional projects are pending

By CHRISTOPHER HAYES
For The Daily Reporter

Spring brings new life to the Heritage Districts, the five historic Columbus communities known as Franklinton, Linden, and the near east, near north and near south sides.

Excitement is in the air, as four major projects unfold with ground-breaking activity.

This season, the Near East Heritage District will see a major facelift in two of its main commercial corridors.

East Main Street and East Broad Street are the future homes of \$10 million in new development for the area. Two additional projects are pending on Cleveland Avenue.

The four groundbreaking projects are Central Community House's new headquarters; COTA's newest transit center; the Salvation Army's new headquarters; and a Wendy's restaurant.

The four projects together total close to \$9 million dollars of development, hundreds of hours of planning and coordination between some 70 different organizations, neighborhood groups, government offices and businesses.

The development signals the continued growth and revitalization of the city's Heritage Districts. With Central Ohio's population growth projected to double in the next 10 years, the Heritage Districts are quickly

becoming highly valuable and among the hottest areas for development and revitalization.

The Columbus Compact Corp. is a lead coordinator in those efforts. The Compact is a non-profit neighborhood-based organization that provides leadership and supports sustainable improvements to the quality of life in Columbus' central city neighborhoods.

The Compact further empowers people and organizations by linking resources in a collaborative process that ensures active representation for everyone. The Compact helps coordinate more than 218 partnering agencies, to make Columbus a better place.

The Compact contributed more than \$1.8 million toward the four developments while also providing site assembly and land banking, site demolition, design collaboration with neighborhood groups, pre-development assistance, development expertise, zoning process assistance and partner coordination.

Following is a brief description of each project and the project's impact on the community. For more information on these projects, contact the Columbus Compact Corporation at (614) 251-0926.

COTA'S NEAR EAST TRANSIT CENTER

- Location: 1119 E. Main St. (Corner of Main and Champion)
- Up to 12,000 square feet of retail and office space will be leased. The center will feature a COTA customer

service department and two other businesses. Currently, negotiations are underway with financial and medical institutions as tenants.

- The facility will house 40-50 employees.
- A bus stop will be in front of the center on both Champion Avenue and East Main Street.
- Groundbreaking is scheduled for June with an anticipated completion date in December 2004.
- This is a financial partnership between the Columbus Compact Corp., the city of Columbus, COTA, MORPC, Federal Transit Administration and the Ohio Department of Transportation.

- Total project cost: \$2.7 million
- Compact provided site assembly and pre-development activities (site demolition, etc.).

WENDY'S RESTAURANT

- Location: 1054 E. Broad St. (Corner of Broad and 21st)
- Half acre of currently vacant property, historically a gas station.
- Architectural plans for the site will provide a one-of-a-kind design. Historic carriage house style architecture features dormers and a high quality faux-slate roof.

(See Development, page 24A)

University District

Projects are 'investments' in higher quality of neighborhood life

By JON GINGERICH
Daily Reporter Staff Writer

Columbus' University District has become ground zero for one of the most ambitious redevelopment projects in the city's history.

Recent business investment opportunities, a massive rehabilitation of area housing, and the beginning construction phases on the long-awaited South Campus Gateway project, all are signals that the University District is gearing up for success.

Scheduled to open in Fall 2005, the three-building, 500,000-square-foot South Campus Gateway center will be an unparalleled first in Columbus mixed-use development, with retail and residential space to include a 50,000-square-foot bookstore, a cinema, 82,000 square feet in office space and 190 apartments.

The center has been a project in the works since at least 1996, when non-profit urban redevelopment corporation Campus Partners began purchasing parcels of land from 25 area businesses for construction of the project.

Plans for the center were formally unveiled in 1998, and ever since, area res-

idents have waited for the Gateway Center to break ground on the four blocks on North High Street.

Now, proof of the center's progress can be seen in the flesh, said Steve Sterrett, Campus Partners' community relations director, with the foundations for two of the center's buildings, as well as its 1,200-space parking garage, now showing the early signs of formation.

"The steel framework of the South Campus Gateway buildings are rising from the ground around High Street and 11th Avenue, and the project is on schedule to open in the fall of 2005," he said.

"The mixture of housing and office space with 35 to 40 commercial tenants – all served by a 1,200-space parking garage – will bring new vitality to High Street."

And the steel beams that will form the massive Gateway aren't the only structures coming into place.

Earlier this year, Campus Partners issued a request for proposals to provide professional property management and leasing services for the center.

The non-profit group also has begun to field possible tenants for the center.

However, Sterrett said that while the



purpose of the South Campus Gateway is to create a signature piece on campus, it is only one part of the larger picture to revitalize the historic neighborhood.

Campus Partners has been involved in a series of housing initiatives in the University District area, including a massive residential initiative that will bring hundreds of affordable housing options to area residents with low incomes.

"The most significant activity in the University District neighborhoods is the start this spring of rehabilitation of the 550 units of project-based, Section 8 housing, now known as Community Properties. Ohio Capital Corporation for Housing will invest more than \$40,000 per unit in the renovation of the interior and exterior of the properties," he said.

As Sterrett explained, Campus Partners' numerous initiatives in residential and commercial development in the University District all have one goal in common: to provide housing and eco-

nomie opportunities to those who live, work and study in the historic district.

"Although South Campus Gateway is the signature project in the Campus Partners initiative, its success will be measured, at least in part, by its ability to attract investment and activity up and down the street. We are pleased that some of this new investment is already happening. The renovation of the Newport Music Hall is close to completion, restoring the High Street facade of the country's oldest, continuously operated, live rock-and-roll venue. The building just north of the Newport was renovated last year and now houses a Japanese sushi restaurant and saki bar. Bank One recently opened its university branch on the first floor of a renovated apartment building at 12th and High," he said.

"This investment," Sterrett continued, "will have a major effect on the quality of life in the neighborhoods."

Columbus Housing Partnership's goal is to find affordable homes for city's lower-income residents

By JEN PATTERSON
For The Daily Reporter

Everyone needs safe, decent, affordable housing but many individuals have difficulty finding it. One local organization, Columbus Housing Partnership, is working to address these and other needs in Columbus communities.

CHP places a special emphasis on those neighborhoods near downtown and those households making less than the average income for a family of four.

In Franklin and the surrounding counties, this includes any household making less than \$63,800 per year. Extremely low wage-earners, those households making less than \$20,000 per year – or approximately \$10 or less per hour – also are assisted through CHP's programs and housing communities.

Since 1987, CHP has added more than 3,200 homes to the Columbus housing market and has created numerous programs to help potential homebuyers become successful homeowners.

These programs include homebuyer education classes, home repair and maintenance seminars, downpayment and foreclosure prevention assistance programs, and individualized credit and budget counseling. They allow participants to take control of their financial situations, learn how to successfully work

through the home-buying process, and even cover downpayment and closing costs when purchasing a home.

By the end of March, those graduating from homebuyer education classes in 2003 had invested nearly \$6 million in Columbus homes.

CHP's housing development team also works on a wide variety of projects to meet the changing needs of Columbus' housing market.

This year, CHP will complete 64 single-family homes for its lease-option program and will have more than 20 homes available for purchase throughout the city.

In the next five years, CHP intends to add another 500 homes for those who need more cost-effective housing.

"CHP's efforts are revitalizing neighborhoods and strengthening families and communities throughout Central Ohio," said Amy Klaben, president and chief executive officer of the organization.

"We are committed to helping as many families as possible achieve the American Dream of homeownership."

For more information on CHP, visit www.chpcolumbus.org or call (614) 221-8889, ext. 134 for homebuyer programs; ext. 163 for home sales

Jen Patterson is the resource development manager for the Columbus Housing Partnership.

Columbus 
It's Right Downtown.

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT RESOURCE CENTER The One-Stop Shop for Downtown Development

City of Columbus
Michael B. Coleman, Mayor
Downtown Development Office

Columbus Downtown
Development Corporation

Capital Crossroads
Special Improvement District

Capitol South
Community Urban Redevelopment Corporation

A Partnership of the Public and Private Sectors

- Office Incentive Program
- Facade Improvement Grants
- Housing Incentive Fund
- Research & Information
- Tax Incentives and TIFs
- On- and Off-Street Parking Management
- Streetscape Improvement Grants
- Streetscape and Public Space Management
- Utility Tap Credits
- Sidewalk Dining Assistance
- Graphics Approval
- Development Troubleshooting
- Clean & Safe Services
- Architectural Design & Zoning Approval
- Public-Private Partnership Transactions
- Implementation of the Downtown Business Plan

20 East Broad Street, Suite 100, Columbus, Ohio 43215
614-645-5001 www.downtowncolumbus.com

Italian Village

Unique population, diversity, affordable homes and tax abatements contribute to community's desirability

By JON GINGERICH
Daily Reporter Staff Writer

Perhaps no Columbus community has been affected by the city's recent return of urban living more than Italian Village.

The neighborhood's historic flair, coupled with its affordable price ranges in housing and its proximity to downtown, the University District and the Short North communities, has resulted in a virtual explosion of residential development, the likes of which have to be seen to be believed.

"It seems like we've been under construction for years," said Steve Hurtt, chairman of the Italian Village commission and an architect at Urban Order.

Indeed, a short drive down the area's main arteries – Summit Street and North Fourth Street – reveals a series of massive housing initiatives undertaken by some of the city's venerated developers, with the hopes that an investment into the community will pay off much as it did for those who purchased Short North property 20 years ago.

In a matter of months, a three-building, 100-unit multi-housing complex near the intersection of Summit and First Avenue will be completed, offering a range of unit variations between two and six-occupants.

The Jeffery Square project, a 40-acre commercial and residential development located at the former Jeffery Mining Co., site on North Fourth Street, south of First Avenue, also is showing progress.

The project, land for which was bought for \$1.25 million in 1999 by developer Daniel Schmidt, was briefly halted in December when the city of Columbus' Department of Development requested that the site meet six requirements before receiving the \$3 million grant awarded as part of the Ohio Department of Development's Clean Ohio Funds.



Now, local developer Corna Kokosing has begun its cleanup of the former mining facility, and the Italian Village commission has begun reviewing construction proposals for the site. Construction still is scheduled to begin sometime later this year.

Hurtt, a 14-year Italian Village resident, said the construction of Jeffery Place would signal a new era for the community.

"Jeffery is about a third as big as our entire neighborhood. We're anticipating that it's going to be under construction for a long time."

In fact, the Jeffery site is so big, area residents are concerned about the impact it would have on traffic.

Hurtt said heavy traffic already is an issue in Italian Village, and speeding on Summit and North Fourth streets is common. Hurtt posited that additional development will only add to an already difficult situation.

In an attempt to head off problems, area residents have met with a landscaping committee and highway officials to create a T-intersection that would remove congestion and feed traffic smoothly at the intersections of Interstate 670 and North Fourth Street, as opposed to an exit ramp that simply brings traffic to a halt.

"This is a neighborhood, not a highway ramp. We want to curb traffic so that it will enhance the Jeffery site, instead of having this swooping highway ramp run past it," he said.

"But more importantly," Hurtt continued, "it will help the whole neighborhood."

The Jeffery site isn't the only important development initiative currently underway in the area.

Area architect Urban Order has begun construction on nine condominiums near the intersection of Russell and Kerr streets. Seven other condo units will

also be developed near the intersection on Warren and Pearl streets.

Local developer Mark Wood plans to develop a seven-unit condominium project at the site of the former Red Herring theatre on East Third Avenue.

When completed, Wood said, the units would boast a "contemporary warehouse feel with lots of natural light." According to Wood, the warehouse-style building would undergo an intensive facelift, with the west facade of the building being removed to expose large dormer windows that will be placed along each unit.

A parking garage will be attached to each unit, along with front and rear balconies and a small patio on the ground floor.

"We're waiting for the building permits, but we anticipate construction to begin soon," Wood said.

Other recent development efforts in the community include the renovation of a cluster of apartments in the 680 block of North Pearl Street, and a massive refurbishing of the Reality Theatre building – otherwise known as the "Mona Lisa" building for its street-side mural of the famed subject.

Hurtt said there are a few reasons Italian Village has become an increasingly popular place to live. The community's affordability, wide price range and large rent-or-own residential possibilities create a unique and diverse neighborhood, attracting people of all ages and socioeconomic backgrounds.

In June 2003, Columbus City Council created a residential tax abatement program to encourage development in the area.

As a result, officials said, recent increases in Italian Village home buying and apartment renting have come from such diverse groups as empty nesters, young professionals and large families.

"It's a great neighborhood and it just seems to be the place to be."

Downtown

(Continued from page 3A)

Another form of the program exists for businesses simply looking to expand their existing office space downtown.

By virtue of its design, McLaughlin said, the program encourages job growth and keeps companies' standards high.

"The mayor and council put the program into place in response to a weak office economy," McLaughlin said.

"Columbus' 26 percent vacancy rate, in round numbers, represented approximately 2.5 million square feet of vacant office space. That had an obvious impact on the health of downtown, and this program was introduced as a reaction to those issues."

Unlike tax abatements, the Columbus Downtown Office Incentive reimburses a company based on the number of employees it brings downtown and not a single, curt rate: If a company introduces 10 new workers for Columbus' downtown, it gets reimbursed for 10. If it brings 20, it gets paid for 20.

And the program seems to work. In the time since the program began, downtown companies have added more than 700 jobs to the area. Companies such as AEP,

Motorist Group, SBC Ameritech and Ten Resource have expanded their downtown offices to receive the benefits of the program, filling office space that previously sat empty.

"Since the program was implemented, we have been able to absorb some of that vacant space, and council has since approved 21 other office incentives. We have seen the office market stabilize and improve ever so slightly. We project that 1,340 new jobs will be created because of the incentive."

And the numbers seem to reinforce this projection. According to research published by Grubb and Ellis's Adena Realty Advisors Co., Columbus ended its fourth quarter of 2003 with a net absorption of a positive 47,000 square feet of office space, and for the first time in years, vacancy rates for downtown Columbus actually outperformed its outlying suburban market.

According to Adena, downtown boasted a 17.31 percent vacancy rate for Class A and B office space during the fourth quarter of 2003, beating Columbus' suburban market, which reported a vacancy of 19.88 percent, or a difference of 68,000 square feet.

According to the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, Columbus is expected to see a gain of more than 149,000 jobs in the next six years. More than 26 percent of those jobs, ODJFS said, are expected to be of the white-collar variety.

"The signs are encouraging. We're moving in the right direction," McLaughlin said.

But development doesn't always come in the form of residential or commercial success.

Downtown Columbus is not exempt to the advent of creating environmentally-friendly greenspaces and community recreation areas, and work already has begun on North Bank Park, a sprawling, 11-acre preserve to run along the Scioto River near Long and Neil streets, and connect with a rebuilt portion of the riverfront near Town and Main streets in downtown.

Spearheaded by the city's Recreation and Parks Commission, and adopted as part of the city's River Front Vision Plan in 1998, the park will feature a new fountain, as well as a 6,500-square-foot glass-enclosed pavilion overlooking the downtown skyline.

A corridor would connect pedestrian and bicycle paths throughout the park and into other areas of downtown and Greater Columbus, running from the Civic Center and Bicentennial Park, through downtown and into the Arena District, all the way to Olentangy Trails and Battelle.

North Bank Park will come with a projected price tag of \$13.75 million, paid in part by a \$8.75 million grant from the state, as well as \$5 million from the city. The park is scheduled for a completion date of December.

Arena District

Residential components complete area's master plan

By MICHELLE CHIPPAS
For The Daily Reporter

With the opening of the 252-unit Arena Crossing apartments this summer and the 98-unit Arena District Condominiums in Spring 2005, Nationwide Realty Investors soon will put in place the final component of its new urbanism vision: the Arena District.

The Arena District, a \$500 million, 75-acre mixed-use development in the heart of downtown Columbus, boasts more than 1.5 million square feet of offices, restaurants, entertainment and residential space.

With the symbiotic relationship between office, residential and entertainment development, the area has become a magnet which continues to attract.

Arena Crossing is a two-building complex bordered by Vine Street, Convention Center Drive and North Front Street. The first building is a six-story structure housing 16,000 square feet of retail space on the ground floor and 95 apartments on the top five floors.

The second building contains 157 units on seven floors above a three-level parking garage. The parking structure, hidden from street level with easy access to city streets, contains more than 400 spaces to serve residents as well as visitors.

A private courtyard available exclusively to the apartment dwellers includes an outdoor pool as well as a Jacuzzi.

These luxury studio and one- and two-bedroom units feature high-end finishes including hardwood floors, maple cabinets, ceramic tile, brushed nickel fixtures and private balconies.

The condominiums, which are located along McConnell Boulevard between Nationwide Boulevard, Spring Street and Neil Avenue, will feature 12 floor plans with a wide variety of optional finishes and upgrades.

The two-building, eight story project will include



one and two bedroom flats, two bedroom townhouses, and two bedroom penthouses. Prices will start at \$249,000 with most units priced in the \$300,000 and \$400,000 range.

The condominiums will feature 10- to 20-foot ceilings, private balconies, hardwood floors, oversized windows, soaking tubs and glazed showers, a private fitness center, as well as skyline and park views. All resident parking will be below ground in a secured parking structure. There also will be ample visitor parking.

Last August, NRI announced it would be constructing a 165,000-square-foot office building at the corner of Nationwide and McConnell boulevards to house the Columbus office of the Jones Day law firm. The building is on schedule and will be completed in November.

In October, NRI announced it would be building a

120,000-square-foot regional optical center in the Arena District. The Eye Center, which will house physician offices, a laser center, an outpatient surgery center and optical-related retail space, is expected to be completed by Spring 2005.

Most recently, NRI announced the addition of the Arena District Athletic Club, a 10,000-square-foot workout facility that will be located on the first floor of the office building at the corner of Nationwide and McConnell boulevards. The club will be owned by NRI and managed by Columbus Hospitality.

Other new tenants to the district include Wells Fargo Bank, Charles Schwab, Palmer & Cay and Agile Technologies.

Michelle Chippas is the director of marketing and promotions for Nationwide Realty Investors.

Brewery District

‘Creative class’ of residents, business owners appreciate downtown area

By JON GINGERICH
Daily Reporter Staff Writer

According to Jim Tinker, executive director of the Brewery District Association, the proof is in the numbers: It's a good time to live and work in the Brewery District.

"We have 250 businesses in a 300-acre historic district. There is ongoing development and plans are moving forward," he said.

"At least 40 percent of our businesses fall into the 'creative class' category."

Located just south of downtown and adjacent to Columbus' historic German Village neighborhood, the Brewery District has become as much a hotbed for its commercial activity as it has for its popular nightlife.

Recently, however, the area has expanded its horizons to include residential options, with projects such as the Sterling Lofts, Brewers Yard Apartments and Liberty Place becoming the talk of the town.

Sterling Lofts sold or contracted 23 of its 53 existing units in less than four months, with prices on units ranging from \$110,000 to \$260,000.

"They have current (Brewery District) residents purchasing units and even past residents who came back to buy a unit. That speaks well for the area," Tinker said.

Construction on the Brewers Yard Apartments recently was finished and they now are 82 percent leased.

According to Brewers Yard manager Shelley Greeves, interest in the apartments has not been limited to area residents.

"We get a substantial amount of relocation, people moving to Columbus from other urban environments, who think we are the natural place to live in Columbus," she said.

Liberty Place, a 314-apartment project near Front and Short streets, is back on track for development as scheduled, officials said.

The seven-acre site at 100 Liberty St. is located on the former grounds of the

Capitol Manufacturing Co, and was subject to a series of evaluations by the EPA.

The EPA requested that the project's developers remove dirt before residential homes could be built in the area, setting the development back by months.

According to Tinker, the project was again postponed after environmental requirements had been met, but the Ohio Department of Transportation announced it would propose an I-70/I-71 feeder system to run through downtown.

"They (Liberty Place developers) reportedly had planned to start actual construction last October, but delayed it to see what ODOT's impact was going to be with the 70-71 project. I believe Liberty Place plans to start construction this summer," he said.

In terms of commercial development, perhaps the biggest project this year will be the construction of a 66,526-square-foot Kroger grocery store, to be located on Sycamore Street.

Construction on the center is expected to begin in August, and should bring about 200 new jobs to the area.

The 160-acre plot of land between the Brewery District and the Scioto River known as the Whittier Peninsula also will be seeing some major renovations this year, with Columbus officials planning a major cleanup that includes leasing 80 acres of the land to Columbus MetroParks.

Currently, the site is the location of the city's vehicle impoundment lot and a Lazarus warehouse. While the peninsula has been recognized as a wetland location and a haven for rare forms of wildlife and plant life, it has fallen victim to pollution in recent years.

MetroParks plans to construct a nature preserve on the land, complete with a series of trails, paths and bridges. MetroParks also plans to sublease more than five acres of the peninsula to Audubon Ohio, which says it will build an education center for the Columbus community.

In addition, the Whittier Peninsula area will be used for mixed-use housing and "light" commercial development, including small business development such as restaurants or small retail stores.

Short North

Area known for its artistic, trendy community among Central Ohio's busiest in terms of development

By JON GINGERICH
Daily Reporter Staff Writer

Since the 1980s, the Short North's transformation from a blighted warehouse district into a trendy arts center has been continuously met with cosmetic upgrades.

And this year is no exception. The Short North's development plan for 2004 is one of the largest redevelopment initiatives in Columbus.

According to community leaders, maintaining an interest in the neighborhood has always been a high priority. Short North's success, they said, relies on a deliberately planned effort to create diverse storefronts, maintain a unique neighborhood character and cleaner streets and urban parks.

"From a planner's perspective, you have to keep interest alive every moment along the way," said Tim Wagner director of the Short North Special Improvement District.

"The pedestrian needs to have a change in scenery every 30 feet to keep their attention and to keep them coming back."

This year, Wagner said, the Short North is undergoing a "blast of development" aimed at doing just that. The Short North has a series of development initiatives geared at offering more commercial and residential options for area residents and shoppers alike, all while including green-friendly plots of parks.

"People want to be in the Short North because of its urban, pedestrian orientation. People are looking for a quality of life that's not so dependent on the automobile, and the Short North provides that," he said.

Perhaps the most significant development to take place in the Short North this year will be the long-awaited opening of Union Station Place, or the "I-670 cap," the commercial hub that runs along High Street and over the Interstate 670 bridge between the Short North and downtown.

In preparation of its opening, which is expected to be only a few months away, property owner Continental Real Estate has begun fielding lease applications to fill the cap's 26,000 square feet of retail space.

While the cap may signal an unprecedented feat in Short North development, it is not the only development that will bear significance this summer.

Earlier this year, the former site of the Quest Diagnostic laboratories at 935 and 941 N. High St. was renovated into 20,000 square feet of commercial space by local developer Wood Cos.

Wood Cos. purchased the building for \$960,000, and has since begun leasing the property to area businesses.

According to Mark Wood, vice president of Wood Cos., while the building is now fully-leased, most businesses have not yet moved into the building, and fans of Short North shopping can expect to see a series of new and interesting retailers join the area this summer.

North Star Cafe recently began construction on a restaurant to occupy the first floor of the former Quest building. An ice cream shop and an art gallery have opened shop on the first floor of the



building as well, and Wood said an art gallery owned by Hawk Galleries is expected to open this summer.

However, the former site of the Quest Diagnostic laboratories isn't meant to simply hold commercial businesses. According to Wood, zoning approval and construction on the site allowed for two additional floors of residential units to be built on top of the existing commercial ground floor.

Wood described the project as high-end residential, with 20 luxury units to comprise the yet-to-be constructed second and third floors of the building.

While Wood said there is no date set for the second phase of the building's construction, the company has agreed that the project inevitably will happen.

"Two more floors will go on top of it. There are already steel structures on top of the first floor to support two more floors," Wood said.

Another recently completed development between 765 and 771 Hubbard St. has turned what was once a parking lot into three floors of mixed-use residential and retail space. Wagner said street-side retail on the first floor of the building already has been leased, and two floors of residential area above the ground floor are in the process of being completed and should be ready for lease soon.

In April, local developer Peter Avradopoulos of Short North Real

Estate purchased seven housing units at 36-50 Buttles Ave. near the corner of Buttles and Park Street.

The property, which previously served as a boarding house, had fallen into blight and decay in previous years.

Avradopoulos plans to perform a massive refurbishing of the property, selling the units as high-end residential living condominiums.

Avradopoulos purchased the property from previous owner Joanna Baughman, for a reported \$700,000.

Other developments include the recent completion of a dozen homes on West Second Avenue near the site of the former Godman Guild building, a social services agency. The building that housed the former Rice Paddy at 682 N. Pearl St. is also in the process of being renovated, which involved converting a warehouse into a bakery, with Soho-style residential spaces upstairs.

Work on the North Pearl Street warehouse came as a surprise to many area residents and developers. According to Wagner, the building literally was hours away from the wrecking ball before it was saved at the last minute by developers.

But in the Short North this year, development will transcend the boundaries of residential and commercial economics, Wagner said.

Since the Short North's incorporation

into a Special Improvement District in 1998, area property owners have to agree to have a 12-year assessment that is collected on their tax bills to pay for city services.

Area businesses aid in the planning of where their money is going, and one thing almost all Short North businesses agreed on, Wagner said, was the placement of greenspace such as sidewalk planters and pocket parks.

"In planning the area's services and improvements, we included the idea of putting planters along the street. We started looking at how these things should be placed, and then we realized that we could have a lot more impact if we took spots that could easily be beautified and turned them into neighborhood parks. So we said, 'lets make little parks.'"

One such park Short North officials plan to build this summer is a 600-square-foot pocket park on Greenwood Avenue, one block south of Fifth Avenue and one block west of High Street.

The intersection of Greenwood Avenue and High Street currently is blocked with a parking lot, making the park a secluded area ideal for greenspace and pedestrian seating.

Another such park being planned for this summer will be on High Street between retailers The Burgundy Room and Functional Furnishings.

Wagner said the 800-square-foot park will be called Millay Park, named after the alley on the corner, and will come complete with a public garden, pedestrian seating and public art.

"Greenspace breaks the hardness of the streetscape," Wagner said. "Artistically, it's a different feel from a building, and we're always trying to provide some way to break up our parking lots."

A final order of business for Short North development officials involves fixing the ill-fated arches that hang above High Street in the Short North District.

Unveiled during the neighborhood's Holiday Hop in December 2002, the 17 decorative arches that run on North High Street between the Convention Center and Fifth Avenue illuminated the neighborhood's main artery for nearly a month, until the lights suddenly went out — permanently.

The topic has since become a sore subject for the Short North business members who paid for the lights, and in January, Columbus City Attorney Richard Pfeiffer filed a lawsuit in Franklin County Common Pleas Court against Akron-based architects E.G.&G., the consulting engineers who designed the arches.

While Wagner was unable to supply a specific time frame, he did say that city officials plan to get to the bottom of the Short North's light bulb mystery sometime this year.

"An engineering firm and a lighting consultant have been hired to make report recommendations on what needs to be done to the original system. We can expect to have some functional lighting in there soon," he said.

"I really don't know when it will get fixed, because it's a work in progress. We're trying to get it right this time, instead of just getting it done on time."

Clintonville

Light rail system could be a major economic benefit to community

By JON GINGERICH
Daily Reporter Staff Writer

Columbus' scenic Clintonville neighborhood has long been known for its historic homes, rolling parks and Main Street-sensibility. A series of recent commercial developments will enhance that image as they focus on keeping retail strong in the area.

"There are some exciting things going on in Clintonville within the next couple of months," said Ernest Hartong, president of the Clintonville Area Chamber of Commerce.

"If you look at the new addition of store fronts on High Street and Indianola, I think things are doing very well," he said.

Perhaps the most important – and certainly, the biggest – development in the Clintonville area is the demolition that recently began at Graceland Shopping Center, near High Street and Morse Road.

Many residents had hopes that a revitalization of the once-popular shopping center would come, and if there's any time the shopping center could use a face-lift, it's now.

Long time retailer Drug Emporium closed its doors at Graceland in November, and after filing for bankruptcy, Penn Traffic, parent company of Big Bear, closed its entire line of stores, leaving the former Graceland location vacant.

Most recently, 20-year Graceland veterans Burlington Coat Factory moved from the shopping center in favor of a new location on Dublin-Granville Road.

Now, Columbus-based developer Casto is performing a massive redevelopment of the shopping center, starting with plans to rebuild 180,000 square feet of new retail on Graceland's southside, including the addition of a new anchor tenant to the center.

A 100,000-square-foot Kroger Marketplace will move into the former Big Bear site, and a 125,000-square-foot Target will also move into Graceland.

"Graceland is very valuable for the area's excellent demographics and the market that they are able to serve," Casto said.

"When it's all said and done, it's going to be something special for the area."

Hartong said Clintonville residents should expect to see demolition and construction throughout the summer, as demolition crews remove massive portions of the 550,000-square-foot shopping center.

Other retail projects currently under construction include a multi-tenant building being developed on the site of the former Clark gas station near the intersection of High and Winthrop streets, and a multi-tenant, 8,000-square-foot building to be constructed near the

intersection of Deland Avenue and High Street.

Clintonville also will see the addition of Panera Bread and Chipotle restaurants this summer, with a new space for both eateries to be developed in the 4800 block of North High Street.

High Street isn't the only area of Clintonville that's getting attention from developers, though.

Columbus City Council has made recommendations about business formation in areas surrounding the Indianola Avenue Corridor. Their plan was initiated due to concerns of local residents and business owners who said they wanted to increase business opportunities and stimulate interest in the area.

The corridor, a four-mile stretch of road that runs from North Broadway Avenue to Worthington, is a random mix of retail, residential housing complexes and industrial facilities, but presents a lack of retail options. This leaves residents of the area to shop elsewhere.

The city of Columbus recently hired a consultation team to recommend potential business improvements along the Indianola Corridor after evaluating the commercial and economic makeup of the area.

After numerous studies, the firm returned with a substantial list of suggested commercial improvements, including the allotment of 13,500 square feet for three new restaurants, 10,000

square feet for a large drug store and 4,000 square feet for a video store. Other recommendations included an electronics store, a hobby store, a bakery and a gift shop.

Last year's news of a possible COTA light rail station near the intersections of Morse Road and Indianola Avenue has put pressure on local officials to quickly come up with a business plan for that area.

The placement of a light rail station in the corridor could greatly increase business prospects in the area, according to Mike Bradley, director of rail development for COTA. He said similar rail projects in St. Louis and Dallas drove up occupancy rates for commercial businesses located near rail lines by as much as eight percent in less than four years.

Hartong said he, like many other Clintonville residents, is optimistic about the future of the corridor, and said the COTA light rail could be the project that brings a definable economic future to the Indianola area.

"I think, certainly, the light rail would be a benefit to Indianola. There's already some good things happening up there, but there are some challenges on Indianola for the long term, where you have this mix of retail, commercial, office and even industrial. If and when the light rail comes to pass, it would certainly have a positive effect," he said.

German Village

Local business owners, visitors appreciate charm and 'sensibility' of neighborhood steeped in history

By KATHARINE MOORE
For The Daily Reporter

Columbus' first historic preservation district is steeped in the charm of tradition, but changing and evolving with the times.

"We have been pleased by the commercial activity in the Village this year and have felt a sense of affirmation from the number of million dollar-plus homes being bought and sold," said Bill Curlis, the German Village Society's president.

The Village attracted several new retail businesses in the last year: Stella Minatsis chose South Third Street for Seasonally Chic, a home decor and jewelry shop, as did Catherine Adams Lashutka when she opened Caterina Ltd., a gift shop specializing in European house wares.

The landmark Engine House No. 5 property on Thurman Avenue has a new tenant to fill the space left vacant when Landry Food acquired, then closed, the Engine House Restaurant.

Big Red Rooster is a creativity-driven business and design consultancy focusing on developing multi-dimensional brand experiences.

"Our business is currently working with industry leading consumer goods manufacturers, retailers and service providers," said co-founder Aaron Spiess. "We collaborate on projects from designing and developing products and services to the tools needed to position and promote those products and services, to the environments where those products and services are sold."

Spiess and partner Martin Beck have joined forces with TTG Properties to renovate the 13,000-square-foot building. The Big Red Rooster design features a creative studio, prototype lab, consumer-user research lab, and color and materials lab. Big Red Rooster will move their operation from East Rich Street next month.

HER/Real Living Realtor Jeff Ruff and his partner Marilyn Vutech say they often are struck by the affection some people feel for the community when visiting German Village for the first time.

"The pedestrian scale of the neighborhood, coupled with our downtown location really sings to clients with an urban sensibility," said Ruff.

The small lots provide just enough greenspace to create gardens and entertainment areas, without demanding the attention of suburban lawns. But amenities are not short-changed, according to Ruff.

"You'd be surprised to know how many German Village homes have swimming pools tucked away," he said.

The Vutech and Ruff team report that the mid-priced residential market, from \$400,000 to \$700,000, remains the strongest, but a record number of million dollar plus transactions are taking place. Convincing that first buyer to hit the million dollar mark was tough said Ruff, "but now that there is a precedent, prospective residents have confidence in making such an investment in the neighborhood."

Katharine Moore is the executive director of the German Village Society.



Residential Projects Under Construction/Completed

Project Name	Developer	Location	# of Units	Site Area	New or Renovation	Condo or Rental	Total Cost of Project (M)
Arena Crossing	Nationwide Realty Investors	Front & Vine	252	2.00	New	Rental	\$35.0
Sixty Spring Apartments	JDS Enterprises	Pearl & Spring	68	0.44	Renovation	Rental	\$8.0
The Terraces	Berardi LLC	Grant & Walnut	44	0.34	New	Condo	\$6.2
Sixty Spring Condos	JDS Spring LLC	Pearl & Spring	37	0.33	New	Condo	\$5.0
145 High	Long & Wilcox	High & Long	22	0.41	New/Renovation	Condo	\$6.0
15 E. Gay St.	Don DeVere	Pearl & Gay	12	0.17	Renovation	Rental	\$1.4
33 W. Rich St.	John Prater	Wall & Rich	4	0.05	Renovation	Rental	NA
108 E. Main St.	Rick Wolverton	Third & Main	2	0.04	Renovation	Rental	\$0.1
199 S. High St.	Peter Brown	High & Walnut	2	0.09	Renovation	Rental	\$0.2
232 S. Fourth St.	Ivan Romanoff	Fourth & Rich	1	0.03	New/Renovation	Condo	\$0.3
340-348 S. High St.	Oxford Realty	High & Mound	6	0.23	Renovation	Rental	\$0.4
Washington Rich Townhomes	JDS Companies	Washington & Rich	4	0.13	New	Condo	\$0.8
382 E. Town St.	Jeff Darbee & Nancy Recchie	Grant & Town	1	0.13	New	Single Family	\$0.4
Brewer's Gate Town Homes	Revealty	Front & Deshler	35	0.85	New	Condo	\$7.0
New Village Place	CMHA	First/Fourth/Second	100	6.06	New	Rental	\$16.0
N. 4th/N. 6th/W. 3rd	New Victorians	N. 4th/N. 6th/W. 3rd	28		New	Condo/Rental	\$3.5
Second & Summit	Rob Blunk	Summit & Second	9	0.39	New	Condo	\$1.7
682 N. Pearl St.	Giannopoulos Properties	Pearl & Brickel	4	0.13	Renovation	Rental	\$0.5
Parkview at Goodale Park	Long and Wilcox	Park & Poplar	28	0.42	New	Condo	\$3.8
102-106 Buttles	Freshwater Properties	Park & Buttles	7	0.41	New	Condo	\$1.5
Highland Square	Terraco LLC	Highland & Third	5	0.19	New/Renovation	Condo	\$1.1
1037 N. High St.	Buckeye Real Estate	High & Starr	4	0.22	Renovation	Condo	\$2.0

Residential Projects Approved *(No groundbreaking set)*

Project Name	Developer	Location	# of Units	Site Area	New or Renovation	Condo or Rental	Total Cost of Project (M)
The Lofts on High	Casto Communities	High & Rich	75	0.38	New	Rental	\$14.0
The Buggyworks	Kyle Katz	River District	63	7.00	Renovation	Condo	\$13.0
Liberty Place	Winther Investments	Fulton/Short/Liberty	308	6.74	New	Rental	\$36.0
771 S. Front St.	Arshot	Front & Columbus	5	0.19	Both	NA	NA
The Jeffrey	JDS Enterprises	Fourth & First	76	3.34	Renovation	Rental	\$8.0
48 E. Russell St.	Richard Bruggeman	Pearl & Russell	9	0.47	New	Condo	\$1.9
Punta Alley	New Victorians	Summit & Punta	5	0.00	New	Single Family	NA
Russell Square	Connie Klema	Kerr & Russell	3	0.08	New	Condo	\$1.0
The Quinn	Towney Quinn	High & Hubbard	54	0.46	New	Rental	\$6.5
941 North High	The Wood Companies	High & Second	20	0.53	New	Rental	\$2.5
Fusion Lofts	Lakota Investments	High & Fourth	18	0.52	New	Condo	\$2.3

Residential Projects Proposed *(No final approval)*

Project Name	Developer	Location	# of Units	Site Area	New or Renovation	Condo or Rental	Total Cost of Project (M)
Arena District Condos	Nationwide Realty Investors	Neil & Spring	98	1.82	New	Condo	\$28.0
Seneca Towers	Casto Communities	Grant & Broad	90	0.23	New	Condo	\$10.0
Adler Building	Casto Communities	Front & Main	80	0.81	Renovation	Condo	\$10.0
421 East Main St.	JDS Companies	Washington & Main	59	0.40	New	Condo	\$8.0
2 Market Exchange Apts.	JDS Companies	Washington & Main	48	0.22	New	Rental	NA
8 on the Square	Casto Development	High & Broad	15	0.06	Renovation	Condo	NA
Jeffrey Apartments 1	Concorde	Fourth & First	316	6.45	New	Rental	\$37.0
Jeffrey Apartments 2	Concorde/Green Arbors	Fourth & First	180	4.50	New	Condo/Rental	\$19.5
Jeffrey Townhomes	Concorde/Waterford LP	Fourth & First	78	2.90	New	Condo	\$17.0
Bay Tree at Jeffrey Place	Jeffrey Senior Limited Partnership	Fourth & First	60	1.50	New	Rental	\$5.6
Jeffrey Lofts	Concorde/Waterford Ltd.	Fourth & First	30	0.75	New	Condo	\$1.3
Jeffrey Single Family	Concorde	Fourth & First	25	3.50	New	Condo	\$2.0
128 E. Second Ave.	CVM Properties	Summit & Second	8	0.49	New	Single Family/Rental	NA
33 Warren St.	The Wood Companies	Pearl & Warren	7	0.19	Renovation	Condo	NA
803 N. Fourth St.	Connie Klema	Fourth & Warren	NA	0.92	New	NA	NA
242 Buttles Ave.	Urban Restorations	Highland & Buttles	7	0.18	New	Condo	NA

NORTHWESTERN FRANKLIN COUNTY



Dublin

Restrictions on housing, standards for businesses do not slow city's growth

By JON GINGERICH
Daily Reporter Staff Writer

If one thing is certain, it is that residential development in Dublin has not been a boring issue this year.

In December, Dublin City Council passed legislation that requires all new homes built in the Dublin area to conform to a series of specific architectural requirements, including the placement of decorative trim on all windows, the placement of dimensional shingles on all roofs, and prohibiting the use of blank walls, chimneys made of vinyl siding, and any foundation that bears concrete blocks.

Proponents of the ruling argued that the new standards would preserve architectural integrity in the community, maintain a level of quality for homes in the area, and ensure Dublin's ability to compete with other upper-income communities in the Central Ohio area.

Opponents of the legislation, however, said the new standards could deplete Dublin of new working class residents, with some housing officials

estimating that the average price of a new build home in the area could increase as much as \$6,000.

The legislation initially was intended to go into effect in June. However, according to Dublin Assistant Planning Director Gary Gunderman, the effective starting date for the new standards has now been rolled back to December in order to give building professionals and city officials time to make needed adjustments.

"We haven't heard a great deal about it since it was approved," he said.

"For the most part, people have accepted it, and now, because the time line is being stretched out, people can plan for it."

The ruling didn't seem to stop area housing starts. In April, Dublin began considering the placement of a six-month moratorium on new housing developments in the city.

Officials cited an imbalance of commercial development and the current swath of residential new builds waiting for permits from the city.

But according to Gunderman, it still hasn't stopped Dublin's influx of new housing projects.

One large project that has been planned for the last year is the Tartan West development, a 439-unit subdivision located west of the Tartan Fields and Muirfield Village golf club communities in Dublin.

Spearheaded by Tartan Development Co., Gunderman said, the project will also involve the combined resources of no less than three area developers.

The 250-acre Tartan West would include a 50,000-square-foot fitness club, swimming pools and a pond.

"The Tartan West project is something that we've been reviewing and considering for the last year," Gunderman said.

"It's a new concept in residential development. There are swimming pools, a spa and a fitness club that comes with it. There's a lot of open space...It will probably take several years to build."

(See Restrictions, page 12A)

Sector 2

- Grandview Heights, Hilliard, Upper Arlington, Dublin, Worthington, Northland

Grandview Heights

Businesses save because community no longer in a floodplain

By JON GINGERICH
Daily Reporter Staff Writer

This spring, the city of Grandview Heights received some of its best development news yet. After years of waiting, the Federal Emergency Management Agency officially has lifted the city from the Olentangy River floodplain.

Now, businesses in the community can drop costly federal flood insurance, a step that, according to director of administration and development Patrik Bowman, would translate into lower costs and spur redevelopment in the area.

"This really is the big story of the year for us. We're in a huge transition, and we're hoping emergence from the floodplain will be a catalyst for development," he said.

Bowman said the news comes at an especially important time for Grandview Heights; while residential living has always been a success in the community, commercial interests in the area need to be addressed if Grandview Heights wants to compete with other Central Ohio communities.

As Bowman explained, recent vacancies within the 1-million-square-foot complex of warehouse space

that lies within the city's limits have reinforced the need to bring newer and more competitive commercial outlets into the area.

Bowman said he hopes the newly-available insurance savings will allow the commercial floodgates to open in the community.

"Not only are there large vacancies, but there are a number of companies with less of a presence here than before. Our residential structure is fantastic, but to me, it says that there needs to be more opportunities for people in the area to find employment," he said.

"I believe that positive, in-fill development can be done right, without changing the character of the town."

One project that could set a trend for development in Grandview's unused office market is the recent renovation of a cluster of warehouses for the purpose of converting vacant buildings into office space.

Titled the Global Office, the project consists of three conjoined warehouses located at 855 Grandview Ave.

Purchased for a reported \$1.5 million, the primary tenant of the building will be furniture store Global Living, which is moving operations from its previous location on Goodale Boulevard into a 56,000-square-foot showroom at the 855 Grandview Ave. site.

Global Living, which generated approximately \$4 million in profit in the last two years, will occupy the entire first floor of the building.

Local company ROI Realty Services Inc. was responsible for leasing the property to Global Living. Bill Greenlee, president of ROI Realty Services, said the Global Office building should be ready for occupancy by the fourth quarter of this year.

"The steel was completed, and the main skeleton of the building is up," Greenlee said. "The next step is going to be putting up the glass and putting the floors in... We should have Global Living in the building by the beginning of next year."

The project was approved for a 12-year, 75 percent tax abatement from Grandview City Council in October.

Bowman said news of the development at 855 Grandview Ave. could put Grandview's commercial growth on a positive course with similar business developments.

"It's a priority to try to get something like this together for the community," Bowman said.

"This is a great place to live. Given our proximity to downtown and OSU, and given the residential character of the community, we think that we certainly can be extremely competitive with new development."

Worthington

Community hopes industrial sector will be an avenue of growth

By JASON LICHTENBERGER
Daily Reporter Staff Writer

In the words of Paul Feldman, assistant city manager and economic director of development for the city of Worthington, the hot button for his North Columbus community has been and continues to be redevelopment, redevelopment and more redevelopment.

One area of concern for the community is the industrial sector, Feldman said, where vacancy numbers have been creeping up in recent years. The city has taken various actions to ease the problem, meeting with some success, but when companies change hands the fate of their facilities often is in question.

An industrial complex on Huntley Road has been the site of a General Electric Superabrasive facility for years. It changed hands recently, and is now under the control of Little John and Co., a Connecticut-based investment banking company. The move looks positive for the community, Feldman said.

"We're very excited about the opportunity for growth in this area of Worthington," he noted.

Another manufacturing facility that has received attention recently is Worthington Foods, a local company that was bought by Kellogg Co. in 1999. News here is not positive.

Worthington Foods was founded in 1939 and the plant, located on Proprietors Road, near state Route 161, will close on a date yet to be named. The announcement was made May 10 and Feldman said it was quite a setback for the Worthington area.

There are 300 people employed at the 143,000-square-foot facility. Local operations will be consolidated with those of another Kellogg plant in Zanesville, Ohio.

Although Kellogg is leaving, Feldman said he and the community are confident about the amount of redevelopment opportunities through Worthington's main industrial corridors on Huntley and Proprietors roads.

"They're getting a lot of attention from other companies and outside investors," said Feldman.

All of the attention given to industrial sectors doesn't mean that redevelopment efforts aren't being applied to commercial and residential areas.

Worthington city officials have a comprehensive plan in the works that involves the United Methodist Church on High Street, the Ohio State University Medical Center near state Route 161, and a series of plans involving the Worthington Mall that sits on North High Street near Interstate 270.

Despite the development of many other suburban shopping complexes in recent years, Worthington Mall continues to survive. City officials have been working with tenants and owners of the building and new development projects are expected to be announced within the next couple of months, said Feldman.

He wasn't able to provide details, but noted that "the mall folks were very

excited" after recent talks between owners and city planners.

In addition, new single-family housing developments in the Worthington area are sprouting out of the ground like magic beans.

"We're already built out," said Feldman, adding that Worthington City Council has expressed a desire to create more housing options for the community.

"Right now, the area is overwhelmingly single-family housing and the city would like to see more multi-family and live-work units like condominiums and apartments."

Feldman said city officials also would like to see more facilities such as the Residences of Worthington at 5935 N. High St. Residences is a facility for residents 55 years old and older. It has been so successful since it opened a number of years ago, that the city would like to duplicate that success elsewhere, he said.

"It's just a matter of finding the right piece of ground to do it on."

Restrictions

(Continued from page 11A)

Nearly two years after its inception, however, it appears that Tartan West could finally break ground.

"We're reviewing the development projects for the next phases right now. I expect they'll be under construction this summer," Gunderman said.

Gunderman noted that the city has lagged in terms of office development in recent years. Much like Columbus suburbs Worthington, New Albany and Hilliard however, an increased demand of office space for the medical profession has slowly awakened the Dublin office market, and has since begun to absorb vacant space.

"Like everybody else, our office market has been flat. In terms of yearly construction, compared to what we had been running, things are lower than they were," he said.

"However, that's starting to change this year. Medical offices are appearing to have some interest in our market, and we've had a fair amount of interest in retail as well."

Gunderman said the city has a penchant for holding the bar high when it comes to new office space in the area.

"Dublin has always been a great place to live, and we have great public facilities and fantastic schools. It certainly is a great place to do business as well, and we have some higher expectations for businesses that operate in our community," he said.



WE BUY LAND WE SELL LAND

CASH OR OWNER FINANCING

If interested in selling, please call
614-228-0027/1-800-309-3595 • Fax: 614-487-8404
or write Larry Clarke
1335 Dublin Rd. Suite. 201D, Columbus, OH 43215

Hilliard

City preparing for planned growth, projected traffic

By JON GINGERICH
Daily Reporter Staff Writer

Retail and office development seems to be high on the agenda for the city of Hilliard this year.

Attempts to compete with area suburbs by attracting coveted tenants in the finance and medical fields has brought the need for office space to the forefront in the city.

According to David Meeks, economic development director for Hilliard, the payoffs are going to be big.

"It's going to be a good year for Hilliard," he said.

Meeks said the city's recent success in attracting more retailers and office space is due, in large part, to internally changing the way the city does business with developers.

By offering more efficient city services such as quicker permit turnover, and by opening dialogue with businesses and developers, Meeks said, the city of Hilliard has made the development process easier for those looking to set up shop in the community.

What's better, it seems that the city's hard work has paid off.

"We've revised the way our building process is handled. Permits are handled a lot faster, and we're being more open with our lines of communication," Meeks said.

"Our willingness to help and get projects finished is really being received well. We're getting some good feedback from area developers."

After the building process was made easier, city officials spent much of last year preparing for massive construction on Trueman Boulevard to make way for the new developments.

The newly paved, newly reconstructed five-lane road connects Cemetery Road and Fishinger Boulevard to Davidson Road, opening up a new artery for the city, and according to Meeks, for more developmental possibilities for the area.

City officials rezoned the Trueman Boulevard corridor from residential to business use to accommodate a variety of different office and retail projects slated for the area.

Last year, permits for development on the southern section of Trueman Boulevard were authorized for the opening of retailer Home Depot.

A series of mixed retail, including a 125,000-square-foot Target department store, four dining establishments, and nine separate office buildings are scheduled to go into the area this year, Meeks said.

Local developer Equity recently purchased the former Red Roof Inn headquarters near Davidson Road for the purpose of creating the Hilliard Office Preserve, a 73,000-square-foot office development, that, according to Meeks, already is nearly 50 percent leased.

"The pipeline looks like its starting to fill up. I know some law firms are looking at the area with a strong interest, and a lot of the folks who are proposing to do business in the area are driven by the medical and financial centers," he said.

"That seems to be what's driving things right now."

In fact, two new doctors' offices – one on Cosgray Road and another on Cemetery Road – are nearing completion.

Another project that will be coming up in Hilliard's retail sector this summer is the Darby Town Center, located at the intersection of Scioto Darby and Cosgray roads on Hilliard's west side. It will feature more than 22,000 square feet of retail space including a 11,000-square-foot CVS store and four additional outparcels.

Local developing company Skilken recently received approval for the project from the Hilliard planning commission, and it intends to break ground on the project this summer, Meeks said.

But because of all the growth scheduled to take place in the Hilliard area in

upcoming years, members of the community have been getting prepared for another type of development: traffic.

Last year, the Mid Ohio Regional Planning Commission began warning Hilliard that the area's current traffic facilities would simply not be able to accommodate the oncoming population volumes the area is projected to receive.

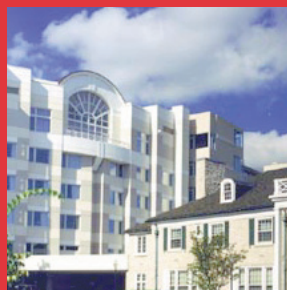
An analysis of Hilliard traffic and growth patterns led MORPC officials to the conclusion that the area is growing quickly, and that the city's current thoroughfare plans for a Hayden Run corridor may not accommodate future growth patterns.

According to MORPC, projected growth for the northwest Central Ohio area is expected to add more than 44,000 people and 75,000 jobs by 2030.

Utilizing census data and land-use forecasts, MORPC predicted that over the next 30 years, the Hayden Run area would receive a 20 percent boost in new jobs, a 28 percent new office growth, and populations in the area would increase from its current 106,000 to nearly 151,000.

MORPC projected this would cause housing to increase by 3,000 new homes in the Hilliard area alone.

Building your vision with...



the end in mind.

It's our only objective. Whether it's a retirement home, hospital, retail store, manufacturing facility, school, or corporate office, building with the end in mind comes down to preparation. At Elford, we carefully plan the work, and thoroughly work the plan. Providing construction management, general contracting, design/build and service and small project services since 1910.



GREAT BUILDERS. GREAT BUILDINGS.

(614) 488-4000

www.elford.com

Equal Opportunity Employer
Copyright 2004

Northland Community

Demolition of mall site will make way for businesses, homes and greenspace

By JON GINGERICH
Daily Reporter Staff Writer

The Northland community took a hit in October 2002 when long-time retail hub Northland Mall closed its doors.

Many community members had seen the end coming for quite some time. A sluggish economy, a general lack of interest and an inability to compete with new shopping centers Easton and Polaris resulted in poor sales and high vacancy rates for the once-popular Columbus mall.

But perhaps the real death blow came in September 2001, when long-time anchor Lazarus announced that it was leaving its home at Northland for a new location in Polaris.

By December 2003, Columbus City Council had voted to demolish the once bustling shopping center, which sat on 1 million square feet of retail shopping space.

Now, the site of the former mall will be part of a decade-long community revitalization plan known as Northland Park, a massive, 84-acre community center comprised of shops, restaurants, upscale residential units, green space and a community recreation center.

Local developer Columbus Urban Growth Corp., along with Northland Associates LLC, has spearheaded the plan to create the park, with the goal of bringing life back to the Northland area.

According to the Brookings Institute in Washington D.C., Northland Park will be the second largest demalling project to occur in United States history.

While Northland Park isn't expected to be completed until 2013, the first structure for the refurbished area, the site of the former Lazarus building, could be completed and occupied as soon as January 2005.

Officials said that instead of demolishing the former Lazarus building, it would instead be stripped, refurbished and repackaged as integral pieces of the new Northland Park.

Best of all, they've already found a tenant.

Retail Ventures Inc., parent company of Value City Department Stores, DSW Shoe Warehouse and Filene's Basement, has made plans to move into the former



Lazarus building, which, as Kimberly A. Koepp, director of marketing for Construction Plus Inc., explained, will be the company's corporate headquarters.

Koepp said Retail Ventures searched for more than a year before discovering the three-floor, 325,000-square-foot former Lazarus building, citing the location as ideal for its corporate offices.

"They wanted to bring everybody together, and they decided that this site was the perfect place for their operations," Koepp said.

Construction Plus, which was awarded a \$11 million contract to renovate the building, began demolition on the 11-acre site in February. Construction and extensive interior and exterior remodeling on the building began in May. When complete, Construction Plus will have removed 6,000 yards of debris, four miles of wall and 15,000 sheets of drywall, and will have added 256 new windows, 45,000 pieces of ceiling tile, nine miles of control wiring, five miles of pipe and 2,500 new sprinkler heads.

Construction Plus said the project would require in excess of 500,000 man-hours.

Despite the massive demolition, Koepp said, a few historical Northland relics would remain.

"One thing that no one's really picked up on is the

fact that the existing Lazarus escalator will stay in the building," Koepp said.

Koepp said accompanying the original escalator would be a new skylight built onto the building's roof, which will shed natural light into the building and add a pleasant aesthetic quality to the facilities.

"Construction Plus joined in the development stage of this project in January of 2003 and we have been dedicated to the community to make this project a success," Koepp said.

Community leaders said Retail Venture's move into the former Lazarus could generate as many as 400 local jobs and relocate nearly 700 non-Ohio employees to the new facility.

Columbus City Council already has approved tax incentives for Retail Ventures to move into the building, including a tax abatement package of 75 percent for 10 years on the value of renovation improvements and personal property investments, in addition to job creation tax credits.

City officials estimate the project will produce \$300,000 in sales tax for Columbus.

"We are thrilled to be part of the Northland Park development. This project is vital to the positive pulse of the businesses and families of this area," Koepp said.

Upper Arlington

Pools, schools and mixed use mark development activity

By JEREMY HOLDEN
Daily Reporter Staff Writer

A proposed new pre-K through 12th grade school, a renovated swimming pool complete with the sought after wow factor and two senior centers are among the developments Upper Arlington officials have in store for community residents in the coming year. But two shopping centers remain the crown jewels of development.

The big ticket items of 2004, the First Community Village Campus, marked at \$40 million, and the Wellington School renovation, estimated at \$25 million, will help change the face of the community in terms of childhood education and senior living, according to Dean Sivinski, the community's development director.

Sivinski said the senior retirement home is on a three-to-five-year schedule, and community planners hope to forge ahead with the school project by mid- to late 2004.

Located between the school and retirement home, one of the community's main shopping centers continues to attract clients with its new modern design. In recent months two restaurants, Rusty Bucket and a Wolfgang Puck Express, have announced plans to operate eateries at opposite ends of the rehabbed Lane Avenue Shopping Center. In addition, developers have gutted the interior, creating a mixed-use space at the center and given the mall a face-lift.

"It's an excellent re-do," Sivinski said. "I think just the synergy and activity that is going to take place there is an improvement."

While recent anchor addition Bed, Bath & Beyond and soon-to-be approved Coldwater Creek give city planners hope for the rehabbed shopping center, planners have similar goals for Upper Arlington's Kingsdale shopping center.

At this point, the center's owners have submitted some plans, but Sivinski noted that planners hope a developer will step in to create a mixed-use area.

On the residential front, the continued trend toward rehabbing existing homes helps the built-out inner suburb, which Sivinski said sees between \$20 million to \$25 million each year in residential renovations. That trend, he said, is helped by the community's reputation for fostering appreciation on its homes.

"They know they will get a return on that investment," he said.

Water-lovers in the northwest Columbus suburb will have one more summer at the community's Hastings swimming pool, scheduled to close in August for a \$3 million renovation. Then, a new pool will open — one with "a wow factor," Sivinski said.

In addition to work on First Community's 29.4-acre campus for independent senior living, plans also are in the works for \$800,000 in development for the Avia senior housing community in northern Upper Arlington. WSNY's radio station also has plans for \$750,000 in expansions, Sivinski added.

Upper Arlington remains aflutter with both commercial and residential renovation, he said.

"In doing that you build yourself a stronger community."

NORTHEASTERN FRANKLIN COUNTY



New Albany

Village will see more medical offices, growth of residential developments

By JON GINGERICH
Daily Reporter Staff Writer

According to Joseph Stefanov, administrator for the Village of New Albany, development refers to two things this summer: office and residential growth.

While the village has been a hot bed for residential development for much of the last decade, Stefanov said, the recent explosion of office space in the area can be attributed to the creation of the New Albany surgical hospital on Smith's Mill Road, which has forged a stronghold in the medical profession for the area.

"We've received a great deal of interest in office development in the area adjacent to the (New Albany) surgical hospital. There is a market for medical professionals in the New Albany area and people are interested in meeting that need," he said.

Developer Canini and Pellecchia soon will begin breaking ground on a medical campus adjacent to the New Albany surgical hospital. The five building development, which will consist of 8,880-square-foot single story units, will be created in a condo format, allowing investors to either buy a portion of the building or several buildings at a time, depending on the nature of the business and their needs.

Stefanov said the project could break ground this summer.

The New Albany Company is scheduled to break ground on six office buildings on Walton Parkway, with the first building slated to open this year.

In terms of residential development, New Albany continued to blaze ahead at unprecedented speeds, with a series of new developments slated to begin this summer.

Canini and Pellecchia's Tidewater at New Albany is expected to create an estimated 60 new homes for the area.

The 52-acre parcel of land near the intersection of Kitzmiller and Central College roads recently was annexed into the village from neighboring Plain Township after the developers bought the acreage from private owners.



Sector 3

- Bexley, Gahanna, New Albany, Reynoldsburg, Northland, Whitehall, Westerville

(See Village, page 20A)

Gahanna

Creekside project will bring new life, continuity to downtown

By JON GINGERICH
Daily Reporter Staff Writer

A recently-approved initiative may lead to the most significant development in the city of Gahanna's history.

Last month, preliminary design work for Gahanna's Creekside project was approved by the city's planning and zoning commission.

After more than eight years of waiting, officials said ground could break this year on the \$30 million project, which is slated to redevelop approximately 25 percent of Gahanna's downtown by revitalizing land and adding 150,000 square feet of retail, office and residential space, as well as creating a physical extension of the creek that runs near the downtown's Mill Street.

The newly-redeveloped Creekside site would house cafes, restaurants and other retail outlets, giving the area a unique, waterfront feel that is conducive to nightlife and shopping, while maintaining a small-town, shop-front oriented theme.

Officials said construction on the project would take nearly two years to complete.

Local developer Stonehenge created the project and architect Bird Houk performed design work on the project.

According to Gerry Bird, president of the Bird Houk Collaborative, the trick of designing the daunting project was creating an atmosphere that both complements downtown's historic flair while taking it ahead into the future.

"This is such a major component of Old Gahanna, and to some degree, we're recreating the downtown architecturally. Over the years, downtown Gahanna has not maintained an identifiable character, and we're trying to recreate the real heart of the area," he said.

"It's a tough project. The idea is to try to bring a char-

Eighty-nine percent of residents who responded to an annual survey of Gahanna said the city offers an excellent quality of life, more than 95 percent of those who responded said they would recommended Gahanna as a great place to relocate business, and 75 percent rated the city as excellent or good for their entertainment options and strong roster of community events.

acter to downtown that is recognizable and has a sense of place, but to preserve the natural characteristics of the downtown, its natural elements, and to be consistent and respectful of it at the same time."

Franklin County Commissioners gave the city of Gahanna a Federal Community Development Block Grant in the amount of \$250,000 for development of the streetscape portion of the Creekside project.

Each year, county commissioners give funds for projects they feel are worthy to the community. Past contributions included funds for economic development in area townships and villages, as well as for housing programs, social service purposes and homelessness prevention programs.

Given the news of the recent design approval and appropriation of Block Grant funds, director of development Sadicka White said Gahanna residents now can take solace in the fact that the Creekside project is underway.

"We've gotten farther in our approval process, and now we have a plan that's been approved by our development commission. I am anticipating that within the next 30 to 60 days we will have a developer's agreement and we can begin talking to council about funding," she said.

But the downtown Creekside project isn't the only development on Gahanna's plate this year.

Portrait Homes has been approved to create 200 townhomes on Johnstown Road, and Berkely Woods, a development of 56 upper-end condos, also has been approved by the city.

A new assisted care and retirement center, Gahanna Retirement Residents, is slated to be completed by the end of the year, and a new 55,000-square-foot YMCA facility recently opened in the Gahanna area.

White said 89 percent of residents who responded to an annual survey of Gahanna said the city offers an excellent quality of life, more than 95 percent of those who responded said they would recommended Gahanna as a great place to relocate business, and 75 percent rated the city as excellent or good for their entertainment options and strong roster of community events.

White said the survey proves what city official already knew: Gahanna is a great place to live and do business.

"I think because people can live, work and play in Gahanna, and because of our location, it allows us to attract employees and visitors," White said.

"It is very diverse in its homes and very diverse in terms of economics and culture. We think those factors make Gahanna a great place to live."



Look to the Sky for Business Financing

Sky makes financing convenient with different types of loans for your businesses at competitive rates. Take a look at what we offer and call one of our locations today!

- Residential Builder Construction Loans (Specs/Pre-Solds)
- Land/Lot Development Loans
- Model Home Loans
- Condominium Projects
- Commercial Loans Including Real Estate Loans
- Working Capital Loans
- Equipment Financing/Leasing
- Letters of Credit

Gahanna	Columbus	Worthington	Grandview
406 Granville St.	1800 Bethel Rd.	6880 N. High St.	1669 W. 5th Ave.
Coming Soon!	(614) 459-4444	(614) 431-8888	(614) 583-8230

Westerville	Hilliard	Marysville
501 W. Schrock	3580 Fishinger	1055 W. Fifth St.
(614) 583-8259	(614) 850-4444	(937) 642-5010

Member FDIC/Equal Housing Lender

Banking ♦ Wealth Management ♦ Insurance ♦ Investments



Premium Poured Flooring Underlayments

- Pourable before drywall
- Strong, fast application and quick setting for return of light traffic in hours
- Variable thickness, smooth gypsum concrete with sound control and fire-resistance properties
- Residential and commercial, grout bed restoration, floor leveling and radiant heat applications
- 2500 to 8000 psi





PYMER PLASTERING, INC.
Decorative Plasterworks
Since 1886

(614) 252-3737
Fax (614) 258-3258
www.pymrplastering.com

- USG trained and authorized applicator
- Floor leveling, cementitious toppings
- Specialty plaster finishes
- Ornamental plaster, new and restorations

Westerville

Good access, strong neighborhoods, plenty of retail bode well for Columbus' most populated suburb

By JON GINGERICH
Daily Reporter Staff Writer

As Columbus' most populated suburb, the city of Westerville has had many success stories in terms of development.

"Westerville is a great place to live and a great place to do business," said Shannon Hamons, economic development coordinator for city.

While residential development in the area has tapered off in recent years, Westerville will see some new home builds this year, officials said.

M/I Homes recently approached the city with plans to build two residential communities, Millstone and Millstone Creek.

Located near the intersection of Spring and Grinstead roads, Millstone, a 169-home development, has been slated for construction.

According to Julie Colley, city planner for Westerville, M/I recently received final approval by the city's planning commission, and plans to break ground on the community this summer. Colley said the company is preparing the area with the necessary road improvements and tree removal.

Further north on Spring Road, M/I Homes is planning another home development near the intersection of Spring and Maxtown roads, a new traditional neighborhood known as Millstone Creek.

Slated to include 139 homes, Colley said, the subdivision has yet to receive final approval from the Westerville planning commission.

Colley said the zoning process on Millstone Creek would take longer than the approval of the nearby Millstone, due to the fact that M/I applied for a rezoning process for home sizes that is not typical to the area, and therefore applied to have the community rezoned into a planned neighborhood zoning category.

According to Colley, Millstone Creek will feature home styles different from most communities in the Westerville area, with "carriage" home styles, typically averaging smaller lots and alley sizes of 55 by 90 feet.

"They're using smaller homes and alley sizes, it's similar to something you would see in Bexley or Grandview," she said, adding that because this development is different from other communities in the area, it could be months before Millstone Creek meets rezoning approval.

To complicate development even more, Spring Road is scheduled for a massive widening this year, and officials plan to widen Maxtown road next year.

As a result, development on Millstone Creek could be delayed until early next year.

Office development in Westerville has continued to achieve newer and greater heights. In terms of office space, Westerville is one of the fastest-growing areas in Franklin County, Hamons said. She added that recent developments in the area could make 2004 Westerville's best year for business yet.



"We've done exceptionally well. In the last three years, we've added between 30 and 40 companies to Westerville and quite a number of existing companies in the area have expanded," he said.

"We estimate that during that period, we've added 3,000 to 4,000 new jobs to the Westerville area."

According to Hamons, Westerville's business success has become the stuff of legend.

Progressive Medical, which started business 10 years ago from a small office on Schrock Road with a staff of five, recently settled on a 85,000-square-foot office space in Westerville's Offices at Westar.

According to Hamons, Progressive Medical currently boasts a roster of approximately 225 employees. International logistics company Exel chose Westerville for its national headquarters, and in 2002, moved its 200-employee operations near the intersection of Schrock Road and Cleveland Avenue from a 90,000-square-foot office space into a 144,000-square-foot space in Westerville's Offices at Westar.

Exel, according to Hamons, now boasts a workforce of more than 450 employees.

"(Westerville) is an area that is growing, not only as an office standpoint but for companies looking to support their employees," Hamons said.

According to Scott McAfee, community affairs coordinator for the city of Westerville, it is no surprise that both companies chose Westar as the headquarters for their new business.

The 1,000-acre financial center, which contains two 140,000-square-foot buildings by The Daimler Group Inc., has been a powerhouse in Westerville's office development in recent years.

Besides being home to the successful Exel and Progressive Medical, the two-building Westar center recently became the home of a 60,000-square-foot American Family Insurance office, a 60,000-square-foot Liebert Global Services location, and will be the new home of ADD Industries this summer. ADD is moving from its current location on Ackerman Road.

Officials said Daimler Group is planning to build a third, 145,000-square-foot building for the center this summer.

"We are really building out a lot in terms of office space in our Westar Center of Business," McAfee said.

"My guess is that within the next couple of years, we'll have over a million square feet of office space there."

Retail developer Don Casto also has been making an impact in Westerville this past year. Casto recently began construction on NorthRidge Crossing, a 98,000-square-foot retail shopping center located

at the southeast corner of State Street and Polaris Parkway.

Containing no less than six retail outparcels, retailers expected to join the shopping center include Walgreen's, Chipotle, Max & Erma's, Panera Bread, Pet Supplies Plus, First Choice Hair Cutters, CiCi Pizza, United Postal Service and Kenneth's Hair & Day Spa.

Continental Real Estate is building an 80,000-square-foot Giant Eagle grocery store next to the new retail center.

In the nearby Polaris shopping area, Franz Geiger, managing director for NP Limited, as well as development director and construction manager for the Polaris Neighborhood Center, has broken ground on a new shopping center for the area, the result of which, he said, was to meet the increasing demand for retail there.

Polaris Neighborhood Center Two will have 21,925 square feet of commercial and retail space to meet the demands of the growing Polaris area, according to Geiger. He said high-end furniture store American Furnishings will anchor a 12,000-square-foot space at the center, and Levi's 4 Floors has committed to a 4,700-square-foot space at the center.

Hard costs for the construction of the center is expected to be about \$1.5 million, Geiger said, adding that the center should be complete by late September.

Within a year of building the first 31,000-square-foot Polaris Neighborhood Center, Geiger had leased the center entirely, and even was forced to turn prospective businesses away.

"I found that I had more tenants than I could accommodate, so I said 'let's build another one.'" He said.

Much like Neighborhood Center One, Polaris Neighborhood Center Two has gathered immediate interest from area retailers.

According to Geiger, the center was 75 percent leased before the first brick of the building was laid.

"It's doing great. With Center One, the lease went up at a very fast pace, but to have three-quarters of (the center) committed before you even start – that's pretty phenomenal," he said.

According to Hamons, there are more than a few reasons why the Westerville area continues to be successful on all development fronts. Not only does the city offer aggressive abatement programs for businesses looking to relocate in the area, but its convenient location, wide array of amenities and knack for self-sufficiency makes Westerville a win-win for businesses and families.

"I think, clearly, we're pretty aggressive as far as the incentives we offer to companies," he said.

"For one, we have a lot of assets. We have our own hospital, there's Otterbein college, St. Ann's, and the Westerville schools are great. We have lots of green-space, and pretty tight control of our design criterion. There's great highway access into and out of the Westerville area, and we're close to Polaris. When you start adding up things like that, we stack as good or better than any other suburb in the area."

Bexley

Main Street redevelopment, attention to its past paramount to city's continued growth

By JON GINGERICH
Daily Reporter Staff Writer

The historic city of Bexley is gearing up for a series of commercial and residential development efforts to take place this summer, the planning of which has been a long time in the making.

According to city officials, the roots of this year's massive development efforts all go back to two years ago, when they decided to rezone Main Street into a specially-designated mixed-use commercial district, thus allowing residential, retail and commercial development to coexist along the city's vital artery.

City of Bexley Development Director Dan Lorek said the decision was based on recommendations made by the city's Main Street Redevelopment Commission to create a one-stop shop that would attract business and stabilize growth in the area.

"Instead of having zoning dictate what type of development would go along Main Street, the city decided to let the market drive what kind of uses should be next to one another," he said.

City officials then initiated their Southwest Bexley master plan, which

established a cooperative framework between the city and long-time area institutions Capital University and Trinity Lutheran Seminary.

Lorek said both organizations own a series of commercial properties on Main Street; the city agreed to rezone segments of neighborhoods surrounding the campuses for their use, and Trinity and Capital, in turn, agreed to sell off many of their Main Street properties to private developers.

Once these properties were in the hands of developers and fair game for either residential or commercial use, the city then took the newly-rezoned portion of Main Street one step further: They overlaid a tax incentive district on top of it, attracting future developers with financial incentives such as tax abatements.

According to Lorek, the plan paid off. "The idea was to help facilitate redevelopment. There was roughly \$30 million to 40 million in Main Street business that was previously untapped. Now, we're starting to get a response," he said.

Indeed, since the rebirth of Bexley's Main Street, council has received numerous requests for developers looking to lay



claim to mixed-use projects in the area, the majority of which are happening this summer, Lorek said.

One project currently before the commission involves a \$5.5 million facility that would house nine condos and 1,000 square feet of retail space on 2372 E. Main St. near the intersection of Dawson and Main streets.

The five-story, mixed-use development is the brainchild of architect George Berardi, principal of Berardi and Partners.

Another mixed-use project currently awaiting zoning approval from the city is the five-story Bexley Gateway Plaza, a high-end condominium and street-side retail development that will be located near the intersection of Parkview and Main streets.

Described by Lorek as "somewhat larger in scale" than the Berardi project, the two-acre development has been spearheaded by Larry Ruben of Plaza Properties LLC, and is expected to cost anywhere between \$12 million and \$20 million.

Finally, a housing project that has been three years in the making is expected to go before Bexley City Council soon, this time a 36-unit upscale condo development at the current site of the Bexley tree nursery, near the northwest corner of Parkview and Caroline avenues.

(See **Redevelopment**, page 20A)

Top 20 Areas for Home Sales							
		# Homes Sold			Avg Sale Price		
City/Area	Zip Code(s)	2003	1998	% change	2003	1998	%
Westerville	43081, 43082	1,398	1,246	12%	\$224,657	\$170,378	32%
Hilliard	43026, 43027	1,160	941	23%	\$163,948	\$138,390	18%
Dublin	43016, 43017	1,139	1,063	7%	\$282,499	\$211,220	34%
Col/Upper Arlington	43220, 43221	1,049	1,067	-2%	\$236,252	\$180,484	31%
Worthington area	43235, 43085	1,046	1,240	-16%	\$175,324	\$150,379	17%
Gahanna	43230	949	806	18%	\$162,923	\$143,664	13%
Grove City	43123	733	503	46%	\$141,508	\$122,466	16%
Reynoldsburg	43068	710	673	5%	\$140,168	\$115,456	21%
Powell	43065	693	582	19%	\$274,154	\$208,365	32%
COLUMBUS W	43228	670	474	41%	\$120,094	\$101,919	18%
COLUMBUS W	43204	601	464	30%	\$90,593	\$76,588	18%
Delaware	43015, 43018	600	458	31%	\$183,703	\$142,507	29%
Pickerington	43147	566	518	9%	\$189,554	\$153,595	23%
Columbus North	43229	557	477	17%	\$117,856	\$100,103	18%
Columbus NE	43224	549	500	10%	\$80,631	\$70,228	15%
Hamilton Twp area	43207	548	303	81%	\$80,668	\$67,995	19%
Clintonville area	43214	501	567	-12%	\$184,295	\$136,771	35%
German Village area	43206	486	369	32%	\$133,248	\$110,973	20%
Columbus SE	43232	465	401	16%	\$94,984	\$78,805	21%
Bexley	43209	419	433	-3%	\$216,206	\$174,953	24%

The Columbus Board of Realtors® Multiple Listing Service (MLS) serves all of Franklin, Delaware, Union, Madison and Morrow Counties and some of Licking, Fairfield, Knox, Logan, Marion and Pickaway Counties.

Reynoldsburg

Pedestrian-friendly streetscape will showcase city's character

By SEAN CASEY
Daily Reporter Staff Writer

The city of Reynoldsburg is in the midst of a slew of improvement projects that will create a more open and pedestrian-friendly streetscape, alleviate traffic problems, enrich the school system and erect a new facility for the diagnosis and treatment of diseases. Once the ribbons are cut on these ambitious initiatives, a new Reynoldsburg will emerge.

Because the quality and consistency of the Main Street, Brice Road and Livingston Avenue corridors is vital to the economic well-being of Reynoldsburg, city officials have earmarked funds to create an inviting and cohesive atmosphere along these thoroughways.

John Brandt, the city's director of development, said the first of the improvement project's six phases is nearly completed, as the stretch of Main Street between Brice Road and Rose Hill Drive has had its overhead utility lines buried, has been enclosed with new brick-accented, tree-lined sidewalks and outfitted with decorative street lights.

Once the Ohio Department of Transportation resurfaces the road and installs mast-arm traffic signal poles, phase one will be completed, offering residents a preview of the future of their town's character.

Brandt said the entire project will be

realized in the next five to six years as funding for the five remaining phases is secured, and costs are estimated to be between \$20 million and \$40 million. But once it is finished, the renovation initiative will increase business activity as well as property value and demand. City officials hope the project will bolster the image of Reynoldsburg and enhance community pride.

The city's primary commercial corridors are not the only areas for ODOT renovation. Reynoldsburg City Council recently approved \$308,000 for the creation of two new lanes of traffic on state Route 256 at the Interstate 70 interchange.

The approved funds represent the city's share of the \$1.9 million price tag of the project, which will result in the repaving and repainting of the street surface. Although the street will not be widened, an additional lane of traffic in each direction will be produced from the Taylor Square Shopping Center in Reynoldsburg to the Marcus Theaters in Pickerington.

Brandt said the project will greatly decrease the traffic bottlenecks on the busy interchange, and in effect increase interest in the city's commercial and residential markets.

The improved traffic patterns also will help the development of a 210-acre plot near the interchange, he said. Local developer Don M. Casto has partnered

with Noble Properties Inc., the Atlanta-based owner of the land, to create up to 700,000 square feet of retail space, more than 200,000 square feet of office space and three or four hotels.

A 65-acre section of the plot will also be used for the construction of single-family homes and apartments.

Construction is slated to begin later this year, and the project is expected to be completed in the next three to five years, bringing with it expansion and retention of jobs for area residents and increased tax revenue for the city.

In addition to the Taylor Square project, Reynoldsburg has another construction initiative in the hopper that will bring biological research pioneers to the city.

Building already has begun on a two-story laboratory that will house operations for the Ohio Department of Health on the first floor and the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency on the second.

Jim Buchy, the deputy director of the Ohio Department of Agriculture, said the 77,000-square-foot lab is expected to open its doors to approximately 100 employees in February 2006.

The health department and Ohio EPA had to find new locations for their respective pathology and environmental research after the agencies' current joint location on The Ohio State University's west campus was redesignated for other functions, Buchy said.

These divisions of the agencies have a rich tradition of producing indispensable research and innovations in the study and treatment of diseases affecting humans and animals, he said. That means there is a good chance that Reynoldsburg, home of the tomato festival, may soon become the breeding ground of some historic advancement in biology, Brandt said.

"And it brings in a \$5 million payroll, which doesn't come around every day," he added.

The lab construction comes on the heels of the recent expansion project of Mount Carmel East Hospital, which has driven up demand for more nearby office space for doctors, Brandt said. There already has been one new build and one refurbished building that offers office space to physicians that practice at the hospital, and the city has received numerous phone calls inquiring about more, he said.

As Reynoldsburg continues to grow and support initiatives that foster future growth, it is also important for the city's already-reputable school system to keep pace with an increasing population, Brandt said. As such, construction is underway on a new elementary and a new middle school in the city, and facility renovations are being made to Reynoldsburg High School and Hannah Ashton Middle School, making those campuses compatible with current and future needs.

(See Streetscape, page 20A)



Your partner for ...

- Landscape Architecture
- Landscape Construction
- Landscape Management
- Estate Gardening



urban environments, inc.

3001 Innis Road Columbus, Ohio 43224
phone: 614.478.2085 fax: 614.478.2086
jkorte@urbanenvironments.com
www.urbanenvironments.com

Call us to discuss your landscape design, construction or maintenance needs.

Whitehall

Addition of new retailers a ‘positive addition’ to community

By JON GINGERICH
Daily Reporter Staff Writer

In an attempt to absorb local demand and bring shopping back to the community, the city of Whitehall has been pursuing a series of developments in the city’s retail sector.

City officials hope that by offering competitive incentives for businesses to open shop in the area, they can balance an economy and make area residents happy at the same time.

According to Diane Hopper, executive director of the Whitehall Area Chamber of Commerce, development is a process that goes hand-in-hand with the city’s goals.

As the city moves into another year, Hopper said, retail development will be on the minds of many city officials. The Chamber of Commerce currently is working with city leaders to expand the development of the city with the creation of the “Shop Whitehall” program, which will encourage businesses to set up shop and to balance the local retail economy.

“Over the past few years I have seen many changes in our town, from the re-development of East Main Street, Yearling Road and Broad Street, to the schools improving their test scores,” Hopper said.

“These changes are now taking effect and we are more attractive to retailers. I think in the future you will see this town improve by leaps and bounds.”

The first sign of retail improvement in the area came last month, when city recently approved the creation of a Wal-Mart store near the intersection of East Main Street and Collingwood Avenue.

While the decision was met with opposition from many Whitehall residents who did not want “big box” development in their city for fear of traffic congestion or wanton sprawl, Hopper said the Chamber and city officials supported the development because of the amount of business it would bring to the community. They called Wal-Mart a “positive addition to the community and businesses.”

“The Chamber believes this will span and increase development of the East Main Street area,” Hopper said.

In an attempt to ebb traffic concerns and appease area residents who may be leery about the development, Hopper said the retail giant has agreed to create a reten-

Whitehall has been busy focusing on overall development in its Main Street area, planting trees, placing new brick sidewalks, paving streets and performing code enforcement on many of the area’s properties. At the end of the day, Hopper said, all of this development effort will serve a similar purpose: to create the small-town feeling of home that makes Whitehall a great place to live and do business.

tion pond and accompanying turning lane land on Main Street.

“There have been some concerns about extra traffic in the area as a result of the store,” she said. “Wal-Mart has been very forthcoming to make sure their building makes a good addition to the community.”

But Wal-Mart isn’t the only large retail addition the city will see this year. Hopper said a Target store is scheduled to go in at the site of the former Ame’s department store near the intersection of Broad Street and Robinwood Lane.

The Ame’s building was demolished several months ago to make way for the new retailer, Hopper said.

A Staples store also is scheduled to make an appearance in the area, at the site of the former Drug Emporium on Broad Street and Colingwood Avenue, Hopper said.

On other development fronts, it looks like Whitehall will be the recipient of a new Veteran’s Administration

clinic, to be developed on the grounds of the Defense Supply Center of Columbus.

Scheduled to open in early 2007, the new clinic will replace the area’s former clinic on Leonard Avenue.

As Whitehall’s biggest gem, the Defense Supply Center distributes military supplies for land and maritime missile systems for the U.S. government.

With an employee roster of nearly 5,000, the DSCC generates an estimated \$3 billion a year and is a powerhouse for both the local and state economy.

But, a periodic review of all national military bases and supply centers in 2005 has many area officials worried that the center could close its doors.

To ensure that the center stays up to snuff, the state gave DSCC \$186,000 in January to pay for repairs and cosmetic work, and the Whitehall Chamber of Commerce is working to attract more local funds to the center.

Hopper said the news of a new VA clinic on the grounds of the center is positive step toward ensuring the DSCC’s survival, and noted that the consensus around town is that the center will remain.

“Everyone is pretty confident that we’ll keep it,” she said.

Finally, Whitehall has been busy focusing on overall development in its Main Street area, planting trees, placing new brick sidewalks, paving streets and performing code enforcement on many of the area’s properties.

Hopper said the cleanup focuses on residential areas as well. The city has begun a series of programs to give generous tax incentives for area homeowners who give cosmetic upgrades to their properties.

At the end of the day, Hopper said, all of this development effort will serve a similar purpose: to create the small-town feeling of home that makes Whitehall a great place to live and do business.

“Whitehall has a small town feel with the convenience of being close to downtown and all major freeways. As a resident, you will find our city leaders care about quality of life and improvement of our town. Our excellent police, fire, parks and street services attract many residents wanting to get out of the bigger areas and find a city where safety and protection are a priority,” she said.

Village

(Continued from page 15A)

Stefanov said the homes will boast a traditional Georgian look, but will feature a wide array of building materials.

Another new subdivision, The Windsor, will be located south of the state Route 161 expressway in the north end corner of New Albany. The subdivision is the newest creation of M/I Homes.

Stefanov described the subdivision as a “traditional” development built in the style of the M/I showcase division. City officials expect the subdivision to be completed within the next month.

The New Albany Company also is in the second phase of its development in building what Stefanov described as Georgetown-style townhouses on the Village’s Market Street. The development process will involve removing and renovating many of the vintage 1960s-era and 1970s-era homes there, Stefanov said.

New Albany also is moving ahead in other forms of development this year, particularly in developing public green-space for village residents.

Stefanov said village officials still are in the process of talking with the city of Columbus about the possibility of creating a metro park for New Albany, a process that has been on the city’s drawing board for more than a year.

Redevelopment

(Continued from page 18A)

Lorek said city council has debated since 2001 about whether the site should be the grounds for high-end condos or a nature preserve and park. In the end, it appears the former option won, and local architect and developer Rider Brice of Rider Brice Architects and builders have taken their preliminary development plans to council to build a \$13 million condo development at the site.

Lorek said the idea of turning a Bexley tree nursery into a high-end condo development wasn’t an idea that wasn’t taken without some opposition from community and council members alike.

“We’ve been working on this since 2001. To make a long story short, based on staff recommendations, city council approved the condominium approach. That developer has since come though the preliminary zoning revue process, but has yet to get final approval,” Lorek said.

And when it comes to a historic city like Bexley, it seems only right that many community members would want to take the steps necessary to preserve the elements that make a city special.

This adage becomes especially true when thinking of Bexley’s location in relation to surrounding Columbus and nearby Whitehall. As a city, Bexley really has

nowhere to build but up, leaving many to believe that steps must be taken to ensure than encroaching Columbus development does not disturb the area’s precious landmarks.

As a result, Bexley citizens concerned with the future of their community recently have teamed up to form a group that will take measures to ensure that historic buildings and homes in the area won’t fall to the wrecking ball.

According to Thomas Hooker Jr., co-founder of the Bexley Landmarks Preservation Committee, part of developing a community for the future means making sure its past is preserved.

“Because houses have been or will be torn down and replaced by other houses, and because Bexley is surrounded by Columbus and really has no place to expand, people are going to continue to try to tear down sites to acquire new homes. I feel there is a kind of time-crunch as far as identifying the houses that ought to be preserved for historical or architectural reasons in our community,” Hooker said.

Hooker co-founded the Bexley Landmarks Preservation Committee as a way to gather information and suggestions from area citizens concerned about buildings that might be considered historically significant, or are in need of protection from development and demolition.

Working in conjunction with the city of Bexley, the Bexley Historical Society

and the Bexley architectural revue board, the Preservation Committee keeps records of homes it considers significant and in need of preservation assistance.

Homes and buildings registered as historically significant with the city are then protected in the advent that someone purchases the property with the intent of demolishing the building.

“What we’re doing right now is asking people to contact us with information about historical houses in the area,” Hooker said.

“It’s a project that’s going to take quite a while, but we believe that this is a way to save much of the area’s history.”

Streetscape

(Continued from page 19A)

The development of the city of Reynoldsburg holds much promise for the balance of 2004 and into 2005. Aggressive building projects slated in the city will enhance Reynoldsburg’s commercial activity and school system, while landscape improvements will increase property values and foster community pride. The Greater Columbus areas will benefit from a more efficient interchange at I-70 and state Route 256, and the world just might benefit from the next innovation developed in the ODH/Ohio EPA lab or the expanded Mount Carmel East Hospital.

SOUTHERN FRANKLIN COUNTY



Groveport

Traffic, both air and land, are issues affecting community's development

By **BOB PASCHEN**
Daily Reporter Staff Writer

Traffic is a topic of discussion in Groveport, in terms of both automobiles and airplanes.

Rickenbacker International Airport continues to grow both its passenger and cargo volume. According to an April report released by the Columbus Regional Airport Authority, the agency that oversees operations at Rickenbacker, 16,366 passengers flew out of the airport in March. Since the passenger terminal opened in June 2003, Rickenbacker has served 35,625 travelers.

John Malabad, manager for business development at Rickenbacker, said passenger flights are "surprisingly" numerous.

"If you had asked me one year ago what we would have (in terms of passengers), I would have said we would be lucky to have three flights a week."

Counting only Hooters and Southeast airlines, there now are 24 weekly flights out of Rickenbacker.

Though passenger traffic is a bright spot for the airport, its moneymaker is cargo. According to the CRAA, cargo

operations in March included more than 8,268 metric tons, a 16 percent increase from March 2003. Year-to-date, more than 22,105 metric tons of cargo have moved through the airport, an increase of 12 percent from last year.

Automobile traffic may be picking up, too. According to Groveport director of development Jeff Green, portions of state Route 33 slowly will be transformed over the next several years into a freeway. The changes, expected to begin in 2007, are designed to end traffic jams, while increasing the flow of commercial cargo.

The design for S.R. 33 includes widening lanes and taking out all traffic lights, replacing them with overpasses, he said.

Even now, some in the Groveport community are pushing to take the traffic light at Ebright road out, Green said.

"There's been a huge public outcry at every council meeting," Green said. Residents think extracting the light now will make the intersection unnecessarily unsafe.

"We (in Groveport government) agree that the light needs to come out, but we need an overpass in first," he said.

Near Rickenbacker, two companies continue to develop land for the growing influx of local, national and international businesses. The duty-free Foreign Trade Zone space near the airport is advantageous for a growing list of businesses.

Green said Duke Realty Corp., has 92 acres in its Groveport Commerce Center holdings. Most construction is warehouse space leased or sold to companies, some of it built to predetermined company specifications.

Also, Opus North, a real estate development firm, is building its own palette of warehouse space.

Residential growth has been slow and steady, Green said. Some sprawl has reached the south Columbus community, but its not overrun with housing projects.

"We've added about 100 to 125 units per year," said Green. "We've had slow but consistent growth. It's still manageable."

New and growing subdivisions include Elmont Place, off Old Hamilton Road; Bixby Greens, off Bixby Road; Founders Bend, at the intersection of S.R. 317 and Old Hamilton Road; and Newport Village on Rohr Road.

Sector 4

- Canal Winchester, Grove City, Groveport, Pickerington

Pickerington

Downtown revitalization provides ‘restfulness in a rustic setting’

By JON GINGERICH
Daily Reporter Staff Writer

To anyone familiar with goings-on in the city of Pickerington, it should be no surprise to hear that area housing will not be a high priority on the 2004 development roster.

Last year, pressure by concerned citizens pushed Pickerington to pass a new growth management plan that included an ordinance to limit the number of residential homes that can be built in the area.

According to the plan, a maximum of 100 single-family homes can be built in Pickerington over the course of one year. Area building permits are tallied in quarterly drawings, so only 25 new homes can be built in the city each quarter.

Pickerington officials cited steep increases in area housing starts and population levels over the last decade as one reason to limit the number of homes being built in the community.

Other reasons included a strained school system and lack of commercial development, which left the scales uneven in terms of demand for retail and office space within the city.

However, therein lies the rub. The city’s housing ordinance is scheduled to be temporary; the ordinance should be lifted in a few years, thereby giving officials what they believe to be an opportunity to focus on other forms of development, namely by improving their historic downtown area and adding more retail to the community.

“As with every community, we want to expand our commercial base but we are proud that our retail and service industry is neighborhood friendly,” said Heidi Riggs, president of Pickerington City Council.

“Pickerington is a community that takes pride in being family and neighborhood friendly.”

Construction on a 96,000-square-foot Kohl’s department store in Pickerington recently began. The store will be located on the city’s commercial corridor, state Route 256 just north of Refugee Road. Construction also began on Fairfield Square, a 150,000-square-foot retail center.

Construction of the three-outparcel center is being led by local developer Don Casto Inc., and will house several other retailers officials said.

According to Pickerington Development Director Susan Crotty, the walls of the Kohl’s store already have gone up, and if all goes according to schedule, the department store could be open as soon as late fall.

Pickerington city officials also have made efforts to bring business back to the city’s scenic downtown, Olde Pickerington Village.

Officials recently designated the historic district as a community reinvestment area, allowing the city to pursue aggressive tax abatement programs for businesses looking to relocate to the area.

Businesses that choose to move to downtown Pickerington are eligible for tax abatements on the value of new improvements for up to 12 years.

Moreover, businesses that set up shop in Olde Pickerington Village also are eligible to receive the benefits of the Fairfield County Enterprise Zone, which gives real estate or personal property tax exemptions up to 75 percent of the increase in value for a period of up to 10 years.

Other growth initiatives include five active TIF districts, which were enacted to lower infrastructure costs for new businesses in the area, and a revolving loan fund to help buildings receive repairs and upgrades to meet code requirements.

Crotty said the initiatives, both in the downtown area and along Route 256, were created to draw more area residents into local retail outlets. In previous years, many Pickerington residents were prone to drive to shopping centers such as Easton for their retail needs.

According to Pickerington Mayor David Shaver, Pickerington officials believe they can keep the area economy alive while providing a family-friendly environment that area residents have grown accustomed to.

“Pickerington has always been a desirable place to live. Twenty years ago people moved to Pickerington to enjoy the restfulness of its rustic setting. The revitalization of the downtown district has afforded our citizens the opportunity to revisit a time gone by.”

Grove City

High-end residential development helps boost attraction

By CHARLES W. BOSO JR.
For The Daily Reporter

Two centuries ago, the popular adage for discovering uncharted territory was “Go west, young man.” Now, in the Central Ohio area, that cry has been changed to “Go south, young man”.

Grove City is experiencing a high-end development boom that will provide it and the rest of southern Franklin County with premium retail, housing, commercial and industrial locations.

The Pinnacle Golf Club is a 620-acre community development by Ciminello Inc., which breaks ground this summer. Consisting of 1,800 dwelling units, with condo and single-family lots, and a golf course designed by legendary golf professional Lanny Wadkins, The Pinnacle will allow Grove City to offer high-end residential lots that rival other locations in Central Ohio.

The Parkway Centre is a 100-acre premium retail center, created by Continental Retail Development, located on Stringtown Road. This development will be the largest shopping center in Central Ohio south of Interstate 70.

The project is divided into two equal-sized parts located across the street from each other. Parkway Centre South is scheduled to open October 2004 and has a tenant list that includes Super Wal-Mart as its anchor; TJ Maxx; Bed, Bath & Beyond; Staples; Petsmart; and Pier One.

Parkway Centre North is scheduled to open in early 2005 and has signed Home Depot as the anchor location. Both locations offer out lots with restaurants such as Dairy Queen, O’Charley’s, Steak ‘n Shake and Chipotle.

Additionally, Grove City has 2,000 residential lots platted by various builders which offer potential buyers a wide variety of housing choices.

Grove City has partnered with the YMCA for a location at Fryer Park that opened in 2003. By late 2004, the city will begin development of a skate park in the city’s Evans Park.

Commercial development in the area continues to expand. Pro Logis, Pizzuti and Duke continue to make Grove City a leader in the industrial market with new locations around the city.

New construction figures in the city for 2003 were \$17,339,956 for commercial development; \$61,659,994 for single family; and \$113,560,000 for industrial.

City planners are expecting an even better year for 2004.

Charles Bosso Jr. is the development director for the City of Grove City.

Canal Winchester

Residents benefit from tranquility of village, proximity to city

By JON GINGERICH
Daily Reporter Staff Writer

In recent years, the village of Canal Winchester has been a hotbed for residential development.

According to Canal Winchester development director Bruce Langner, the village has typically averaged between 90 and 100 new homes a year, to meet the needs of hundreds of Central Ohio families who want the tranquility of village living while being less than 20 minutes from downtown Columbus.

Langner said this year is no exception.

“Right now, we have five developments that are under way, all of them being either single family developments or condos,” he said.

“Last year, we saw a few less homes than usual, but housing development is really coming in, in areas north of (state Route) 33. I think this year or next year we’ll see some high numbers.”

According to Langner, residential

development isn’t the only sector blooming in Canal Winchester. He said residents of the village may remember 2004 as the year retail broke into the area.

Developers looking to absorb much of the community’s growing demand for local shopping have initiated a series of commercial developments along the village’s main artery of Gender Road.

“We really have quite a bit going on, retail-wise. We expect to see a continued flow of activity surrounding the Gender Road area,” he said.

Langner cited the March 17 opening of a 203,622-square-foot Wal-Mart Supercenter at Waterloo Crossing Shopping Center on Gender Road.

The initiative was spearheaded by national developer Casto Inc. Casto also plans to create an additional 180,900-square-foot annex of Waterloo Crossing’s retail space this summer.

Langner said also under construction on Gender Road this summer is a Charlie’s Restaurant and a Walgreen’s pharmacy

which will join the recent additions of retailers Popeye’s Chicken and a National Tire and Battery store.

According to Langner, the recent development in the village fills a void that area residents have been craving for years.

“There’s been some pent-up demand for retail in Canal Winchester for some time,” he said.

“I think it’s starting to catch up with the amount of housing that’s been going on around here. Before, people had to travel to Reynoldsburg or Easton for their shopping and their restaurants.”

While development activity in Canal Winchester’s downtown hasn’t been as heavy as in the Gender Road area, Langner said, a welcome addition has been returned to the historic community.

After five years of vacancy, downtown Canal Winchester’s famous Shade restaurant has reopened, this time under a new name: Shade on the Canal.

The restaurant, located at 19 S. High St., has been the stuff of legend since its

opening in the 1940s, offering a full menu, restaurant and bar in the heart of the historic village.

Built in the 1920s, the building that houses the restaurant was erected on the village’s old canal bed. After numerous changes in ownership over the years, the restaurant finally closed its doors in 1998.

Langner said Canal Winchester residents are glad to have the historic restaurant back.

Regardless of its residential flair and recent retail fervor, however, Langner said he would like to see more development of office space in Canal Winchester.

“We’re just starting to catch up in the office market. Right now, there is such a glut of office space in Columbus that we’re going to be behind on that for a while. A good thing that makes an attraction for this market is that we’re only 20 minutes from downtown and five miles from the outer belt. Our land is less expensive land, and I think people will discover that we’d make a good investment for real estate,” he said.

CONTIGUOUS COUNTIES



Delaware

More ‘move up’ housing will upgrade market and therefore keep residents in community

By JON GINGERICH
Daily Reporter Staff Writer

In an attempt to upgrade the quality of its current housing stock and compete with surrounding cities, the city of Delaware has made numerous changes to its housing standards.

Much like the Columbus suburb of Dublin, the city officials in Delaware have proposed new standards for homes built in the area.

While not as extensive as Dublin's new series of standards, city planning officials said the higher standards are intended to diversify Delaware's current housing portfolio, which largely consists of entry-level homes.

By adding more “move-up” homes, or homes that come with an asking price of between \$200,000 and \$300,000, said Vince Papsidero, director of planning and community development for the city of Delaware, the city can forge a housing strategy that has “higher, but fair and consistent standards” and will not lose area families who are forced to move out if they want to move up.

“The reason council asked us to look at the level of our standards was because, historically, our housing has

always been heavy on the bottom end of things,” Papsidero said.

“We needed to target the move-up market. A lot of families were growing out of their existing homes, and had to move out of Delaware if they wanted a larger house. Now, there's 50/50 balance of (starter) and move-up home projects.”

According to Papsidero, the new standards have not negatively affected area home sales.

“Right now, we have 6,049 dwelling units in the pipeline that have been approved for construction but have not yet started,” he said.

Papsidero said residential isn't the only form of development that's on fire right now in Delaware: Commercial development has boomed on the east side corridor of the state Route 36 corridor. While Papsidero wasn't at liberty to give names, he said a series of “big box retailers” have made plans to settle in the area. Papsidero said he hopes this will absorb the city's new-found need for more retail.

Papsidero also said another development project, this one located on the south side corridor of state Route 23, would bring another yet-to-be-announced big box anchor and retail center to the area.

Papsidero said the announcement of the retailers, as well as their subsequent groundbreaking, would most likely happen this summer.

“Delaware residents are tired of driving down to Polaris to do their shopping,” Papsidero said.

Papsidero said he hopes recent economic incentives such as tax abatements passed by the city will lure businesses back into the city's historic downtown area.

“We have really strong occupancy downtown, especially with specialty retailers like restaurants. Our next phase for downtown will bring more retailers into the area, this time establishments like upscale restaurants and more specialty shops, which we hope can strengthen downtown as a destination area,” he said.

“Our historic aspect of downtown has a very good pedestrian feel to it, and it could become a very strong destination location.”

Using the age-old maxim that “retail follows rooftops,” Papsidero said the influx of new residential units into Delaware could have a positive effect on the city's historic downtown.

“To some extent, our success downtown will fall back on the number of rooftops in the area,” he said.

Sector 5

- Delaware, Lancaster, London, Marysville, Newark, Powell

Lancaster

Medical office building in Lancaster should be competed in early 2005

By JON GINGERICH
Daily Reporter Staff Writer

A \$6 million, 45,000-square-foot medical office building to be built in Lancaster, Ohio, will create more than 100 high-paying jobs and over \$15,000 in new tax revenues for city schools, local officials said.

"This is a significant project for our community and part of our strategy to attract and grow targeted industries. We are pleased to be a part of making it happen," said Lancaster Mayor Dave Smith.

The new three-floor building located on the grounds of the Fairfield Medical Center campus in Lancaster will house 21 medical suites for local physicians of specialized practices.

Officials expect construction on the medical center to begin in early summer. It should be completed by the early months of 2005.

"This facility will provide state-of-the-art facilities for physicians we are trying to attract to this community, as well as keep those we already have," said Mina Ubbing, chief executive officer and president of Fairfield Medical Center.

"It is another step toward realizing our vision of championship care to people in the city, county and surrounding areas."

In planning the construction and development of the medical office building, Lancaster-based development group Windsor Co. joined forces with Equity real estate development firm of Worthington, Ohio.

Equity's expertise in the development of medical, office, retail, distribution and hotel buildings throughout Ohio and other states made them an ideal partner with Windsor, which has a 30-year history specializing in man-



agement, development, and sales of both commercial and residential real estate.

Officials at both companies said the partnership, and the subsequent facilities they would create, would signal a monumental development in Lancaster's future.

"This agreement keeps Lancaster competitive with the rest of Ohio and the U.S.," said Jim Johns, development officer of Equity.

Tom Moore, partner in the Windsor Company, agreed.

"It will be a state-of-the-art medical facility and something the community can be proud of," he said.

Fairfield County Commissioners recently approved a tax abatement incentive for the medical building, and Lancaster City School District approved a plan in April that would generate new income taxes for the school.

According to officials, the city of Lancaster and its combined schools will share more than \$100,000 in new income taxes generated every year by the medical building.

London

More homes lead to more retail, but small town feel remains intact

By JON GINGERICH
Daily Reporter Staff Writer

In recent years, the scenic town of London, Ohio, has become an increasingly popular relocation destination for Central Ohio residents looking to get out of the city or evade the malaise of suburban sprawl.

"We've been getting flight from the Columbus suburbs for some time now," said London Mayor David Eades.

Central Ohio home building companies Sovereign Homes and Dominion Homes, along with a swath of private developers, have recently taken an interest in London development.

Eades estimates that within the past five years, between 120 and 150 new homes are built in the area each year.

As a result of London's relocation boom, retail needs for the city's residents have escalated, and city officials have begun working on ways to get more businesses into the town's main artery of state Route 42.

During the mid-1990s, London officials rezoned the area to hold large retail outlets, and in January, a 197,000-square-foot Wal-Mart Supercenter opened on Route 42.

According to Eades, the retail giant created a commercial breakthrough in the area.

Eagleton Shopping Center, which opened a year ago with the placement of a Jackson Hewitt tax office, has in the months since Wal-Mart's opening, seen the addition of a Verizon cellular phone store, a Curves for Women fitness store, a beauty store, a Re/Max real estate office and a Chinese restaurant.

Restaurants Grinders and Chill and Grill have begun construction and both expect an opening date of mid summer, said Eades, who added that a lease with a sporting goods store also is in the works.

"Ever since the Wal-Mart opened, a lot of businesses have wanted to get into the area where they can be surrounded by good retail attractions," he said.

"We've especially seen a lot of restaurants come up. A Bob Evans will be built in July, and there's a lot of fast food restaurants."

In London's downtown, Eades said, a revitalization program to attract business and shopping into the area has resulted in a streetscape refurbishing and adopting a CRA for area businesses to receive aid on building improvements.

In the three years since the program began, Eades said, the efforts have paid off.

"We've reduced vacancy rates by about 30 percent," he said.

"People love London for its atmosphere. It's a farming community type of atmosphere, where everyone knows each other. It's very friendly, and there's a friendly style of living that comes with it," he said.

Development

(Continued from page 4A)

- Estimated employment: 35-40 positions. Estimated payroll more than \$400,000.
- Owner has worked closely with neighborhood representatives to incorporate design features and produce a project that is sensitive to community goals and desires.
- Project to be owned by Watermark Services LLC, the only black-owned franchise in the Wendy's home market
- Anticipated grand opening in Summer 2004 (pending city council approval).
- Compact provided a small pre-development loan; development expertise; intensive assistance with zoning variance process; and neighborhood liaison services.

CENTRAL COMMUNITY HOUSE

- Location: This is a 15,000-square-foot building at 1162 E. Main St., adjacent to a new health center.
- Groundbreaking was in March.
- The facility will house a day care center, community meeting spaces and Central Community House offices.
- Compact provided funding of \$400,000.

SALVATION ARMY

- Location: 966 E. Main St. (Main St. between Carpenter and 22nd).
- Approximately 1.2 acres of vacant land will be redeveloped for use by the Salvation Army as its headquarters with a combination of social services and worship center.
- The new building will comprise approximately 20,000 square feet of space.
- Groundbreaking is scheduled for late spring 2004.
- Compact provided site assembly and land banking.

Christopher Hayes is the public relations director for the Columbus Compact Corporation.

Newark

City wants to continue pursuing commercial, industrial base

By **BOB PASCHEN**
Daily Reporter Staff Writer

Newark, home of the Longaberger Company’s basket-shaped corporate office building, lies about 50 miles east of Columbus just off Interstate 70.

The city recently negotiated Enterprise Zone and Community Reinvestment Area deals with Holophane and Owens Corning to keep or expand production and employment in the area, according to Newark economic development director Steven Fowler.

No new industrial development is underway in the east central Ohio city, Fowler said, but “where appropriate, we are going to pursue annexation to provide land to build our commercial and industrial base.”

He added that the city is going to

clean up at least one, and possibly several, brownfield industrial sites to provide land for future development using state and federal money.

A brownfield site is any land that is not being used for its original intended purpose. A site need not be contaminated, though contaminated land will automatically be designated as a brownfield.

“With our existing companies, we are going to focus heavily on retention and expansion. We will continue to work with all companies to put together the best deals and the best resources to create win-win solutions,” Fowler said.

Though Newark lacks the distribution capacity of Columbus, Fowler said the burg’s location is prime distribution real estate.

“Licking County has quite a bit of

distribution activity, including a lot of warehousing at the Hebron Industrial Park operated by Jack/Rob O’Neal,” Fowler said. “Licking County also has the Harry & David distribution facility.”

Fowler said Newark is attempting to rebuild or modernize half of all of its schools. Construction spending could reach \$1 million.

There are two fronts on the Newark housing development scene, the north side and the west.

Park Trails development close to state Route 16 was started after a farmer cashed in his acreage. MI Homes and Dominion Homes began constructing one- and two-story middle income dwellings. “They are building a lot of houses,” Pryor said. Park Trails is Newark’s biggest residential development.

“Down the road from Park Trails, within a mile, is a multifamily development now starting,” Pryor said. “There’s close to 100 units.” Each townhouse in Reddington Village can accommodate four to eight families.

Three north side developments are ongoing. Combined they equal the size of Park Trails.

“There’s more land on the north side,” Pryor said.

Potters Grove, Timcyn and Kelly Grove contain single family, middle income dwellings.

Pryor said Newark has no sprawl and the outskirts developments are spurred by growing families and Newark transplants.

“I don’t see a move from the interior (of Newark) to the exterior.”

Marysville

Honda, with 5,600 workers, keeps community moving

By **JON GINGERICH**
Daily Reporter Staff Writer

Marysville’s Honda Auto Plant, the first Japanese auto plant built in the United States, has become a vital part of the city’s economy since the first sedan drove off its assembly line in 1982.

Now, Honda officials have announced that they will create a 234,000-square-foot addition to the existing Marysville facility, signaling the single largest investment Honda has made in its Ohio auto plants.

Construction already has begun on the facility, which will replace the oldest of the plant’s two existing paint lines. The \$123 million project involves the installation of a waterborne paint system. The system is an environmentally-friendly way to paint automobiles, and according to officials, reduces emissions from conventional paint systems by an estimated 41 percent.

Officials said other environmentally-friendly additions to the new facility include high-efficiency ovens, air recycling systems and efficient drive motors that could reduce energy use by 34 percent.

Moreover, a seven-acre, 20 million gallon pond will be constructed directly behind the plant to recycle rainwater. The pond will collect water runoff from area buildings and lots, and will be used to cool the nearby plant during the summer months.

According to Marysville auto plant manager Tom Shoupe, the new Honda penchant for a green-friendly facility will translate into safety for both its employees and Marysville citizens.

“Honda’s green factory concepts date to the earliest years of our company and represent a daily commitment by Honda around the world. We reuse parts containers, and recycle steel scrap and other materials on a continuing basis. The new paint facility and the cooling pond are examples of our continuing environmental leadership,” he said.

Construction and installation of the new Marysville plant is expected to take two years, with officials projecting an opening date of mid-2006.

The Marysville auto plant is the largest Honda plant in the state of Ohio. In its nearly 25-years in the state, the Marysville Honda Plant has grown to a \$6 billion cash cow for Ohio, employing 5,600 Ohio residents and with a capacity to produce 440,000 vehicles per year.

“This project is the latest step to keep us competitive in the global vehicle business and ensure the future of our operations,” said Koki Kirashima, president and chief executive officer of Honda of America.

“It is fitting that, in our 25th anniversary year of U.S. manufacturing leadership, we will build an industry-leading paint facility. Our goal is to keep our original American automobile plant among the most efficient, clean and flexible in the industry.”

Powell

Residential development spreads in epidemic proportions north of Columbus

By **JASON LICHTENBERGER**
Daily Reporter Staff Writer

Residential development in Powell is spreading in such epidemic proportions that the city’s development director claims he doesn’t know where to start listing the changes that have occurred in the past year.

Dave Betz, the director of development for Powell, said 369 housing permits were filed in the city last year – the most ever for the area.

That makes Powell “one of fastest growing communities in Central Ohio,” he noted.

Of the residential areas around Powell, the largest and fastest growing is the Golf Village development created by Virginia Homes, at about 1,000 acres. Of the 1,200 units under construction, 950 of them are single family and the rest will be condominiums. The development near Trail Lake Drive features upscale homes beginning at \$320,000.

Shawn Leininger, a development planner for the city, explained that where residential areas are being built, small pockets of commercial, industrial and office space are close by.

Two other single-family housing areas seeing high growth in the community are the Woods of Powell and Rutherford Estates, both of which are being built near Rutherford Road.

Condos developed by Fiori Homes also are popular draws to the community. They are located in the Village at Powell and Murphy’s Crossing at Murphy’s Parkway.

Other condo sites include the Lakes at Golf Village and the Village at Kinsale, near Sawmill Parkway. Fifty-one units are planned for Kinsale and 68 for the Villas at Wood Cutter, which sits at the corner of Woodcutter Drive and Sawmill Parkway.

Stonebridge condos, with 188 units, recently was completed. The project is situated on Seldom Seen Road near Sawmill Parkway.

Leininger said developers also have been looking at a six acre plot of land to build town homes, offices and restaurants. The location selected is in the vicinity of Olentangy and Lincoln streets.

Betz said Powell recently approved a \$6 million improvement project to renovate two existing parks and build four more, and “all these things contribute to a small-time community feel.”

“We have incredible bike paths that extend for 14 miles, connecting all the neighborhoods and great park systems also.”

New to Powell’s business market is Handel’s Homemade Ice Cream and Yogurt, which opened April 4 on West Olentangy Street. A joint project between Graeter’s Ice Cream and City Barbecue is expected to open in July. The two businesses will inhabit separate spaces inside the same building, Betz said.

Other projects for Powell include several commercial and office developments in the downtown area, referred to as Old Powell.

Another ice cream shop on Liberty Street is near completion. A name for the new store has yet to be determined, Leininger said, but he noted that the owners plan to sell Hershey’s ice cream and other products from the Pennsylvania company.

Powell’s city officials see interest in a 16,000-square-foot industrial facility at the corner of Case Avenue and Industrial Park Place, but the building does not yet have a tenant.

An identical building recently was built alongside that site and was filled right away, said Betz.

Are you a 'major player?'



Although *The Daily Reporter* is available on a single copy basis, there are a number of advantages to subscribing, including access to our subscribers-only Web site. With a five-day subscription to *The Daily Reporter*, subscribers receive access to our exclusive databases, and they benefit by receiving tomorrow's news today.

Get the full benefit of all *The Daily Reporter* has to offer. Join the "major players" of Central Ohio — the successful men and women who read *The Daily Reporter* every business day.

For subscription information, contact our circulation department today at (614) 228-NEWS (6397).

THE DAILY REPORTER

580 S. High St., Suite 316 Columbus, OH 43215
Fax (614) 224-8649 Web site: www.sourcenews.com

We are one of a kind.

COLUMBUS, OH AKRON, OH ALEXANDRIA, VA CINCINNATI, OH CLEVELAND, OH WASHINGTON, DC



BEHIND EVERY
Challenge
IS A DEDICATED CREW



Success depends on the whole crew. Getting great results requires diverse talents, communication and leadership. In other words, a great team. We build teams like that for our clients every day. A team to be with you throughout the journey.

**VORYS, SATER
SEYMOUR AND
PEASE** LLP

Attorneys at Law

www.vssp.com

YOU HAVE
OUR SUPPORT:



We invest in the community because of the benefits. For everyone.

The National City Community Development Corporation is an Ohio Corporate affiliate of National City Corporation, and our mission is a simple one: to revitalize low- and moderate-income neighborhoods through loans and equity investments. In particular, over the past decade, we've played a significant role in developing community projects throughout the Columbus area. For example:

- We made an equity investment in the Twentieth and Long Condominium Project, which resulted in the renovation of a vacant five-unit building into owner-occupied homes.
- Our investment in the Delaware Place Project allowed for the construction of six detached single-family homes and eighteen town homes in Columbus' Victorian Village.

There are many other projects as well. And while we know change doesn't happen overnight, ever so slowly, we believe it's working. We're committed to creating economically integrated communities we can all take pride in.

For more information about the National City Community Development Corporation, contact Jackie R. Winchester, Vice President, Community Development, at 614-463-8109. Or e-mail at jackie.winchester@nationalcity.com.

NationalCity.com

Member FDIC. ©2004, National City Corporation®

National City®