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## DEVELOPING OUR COMMUNITY 2008

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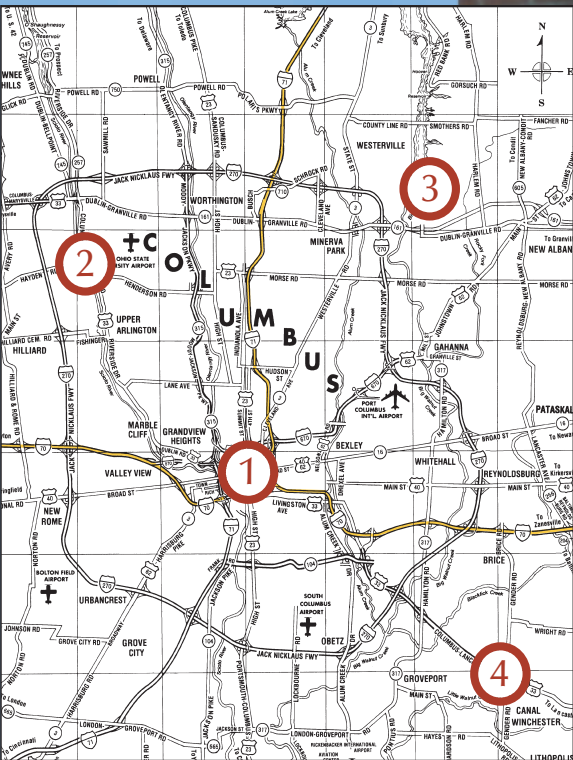
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We have divided the community into various sectors so that we can provide in-depth coverage of our major communities in the area. These sectors are:

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



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# Columbus

## SECTOR 1

Arena District • University District • King-Lincoln District • Victorian Village  
German Village • Clintonville • Brewery District • Downtown • Short North

## More entertainment, more offices, more residential space are drawing locals to Arena District

By EMILY YEAGER  
For The Daily Reporter

The Arena District, developed by Nationwide Realty Investors, continues to thrive as one of Central Ohio's top entertainment districts, adding a new mix of residential, commercial and dining to its portfolio over the past year.

The 75-acre mixed-use development, located in downtown Columbus, combines class-A office space, best-in-class dining, sports, entertainment, hotels, retail and residential, providing consumers with a variety of upscale living options including apartments, condos and lofts.

In December 2007, the second condominium development in the Arena District, The Condominiums at North Bank Park, was completed and welcomed new residents.

Located at the corner of Neil Avenue and Spring Street, The Condominiums at North Bank Park offer 109 luxurious units in two attached buildings — a glass and steel high-rise tower and the former warehouse turned into lofts.

The 80-year-old lofts building,

which opened in 1926 as a four-story warehouse for the Atlantic & Pacific Tea Co. grocery chain, has been converted into 21 one- and two-bedroom urban-style lofts ranging from 1,500- to 2,500-square feet.

The lofts feature open spaces with concrete columns, hardwood floors and exposed brick.

The attached glass and steel high-rise, towering 20 stories high, includes 88 one-, two- and three-bedroom residences ranging from 1,275 to just under 4,700 square feet.

The tower showcases high-end finishes and generous balcony space with glass railings for unobstructed views of the skyline, Scioto River and Huntington Park.

In addition to residential development, the Arena District's commercial projects continue on track.

The latest being the seven-story 130,000-square-foot Class A office building located at 230 West St., which is scheduled for completion in June of this year.

Situated at the corner of West Street and Marconi Boulevard, facing McFerson Commons, 230 West St. will house Lifestyle Communities

corporate office after their move to the Arena District this summer.

The Arena Grand Movie Theatre expanded in May of 2007, adding three new movie screens with Dolby Digital sound, to its current eight screens. The expansion also included the addition of 150 stadium style seats and 500 square feet of additional event space.

Restaurants also continue to thrive in the Arena District with Boston's The Gourmet Pizza Restaurant & Sports Bar opening its doors in June at 191 W. Nationwide Blvd.

Boston's is a full-service, pizza-themed, casual dining restaurant and sports bar offering gourmet pizzas and pastas, along with wings, ribs, burgers, entree-size salads and more.

Offering a contemporary, sit-down family dining atmosphere with a separate sports bar customized with local team memorabilia, this restaurant's result is sure to be a fun, high-energy setting for families and sports enthusiasts alike.

With the addition of The Condominiums at North Bank Park, the Arena Grand Movie Theatre expansion, new commercial space and a brand new family-friendly restaurant, the Arena District continues to evolve and build excitement in the community.

Huntington Park, home of the Columbus Clippers Triple A baseball affiliate, will only build on that excitement when it opens its doors in Spring 2009.

*Emily Yeager is the senior communications coordinator for Nationwide Realty Investors.*



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# Return of Gordon Gee has positive impact on University District

By STEVE STERRETT  
For The Daily Reporter

New construction projects in the University District were a sign of the area's resurgent vitality in 2007, but the most positive signal for the future of the neighborhoods around The Ohio State University may have been the return of E. Gordon Gee.

"We are all greatly encouraged by Gordon Gee's return as president of Ohio State," said Pasquale Grado, executive director of the University Community Business Association.

Grado recalled Gee's concern with the quality of life in the neighborhoods during his first term as OSU president from 1990 to 1997, his creation of Campus Partners in 1995, and the planning and projects that have been undertaken over the past decade.

"With Gee's enthusiasm and commitment, I'm optimistic about what we will be able to get done now," he said.

William Graver, vice president and general manager of Buckeye Real Estate, confirmed Grado's observation about Gee's return.

"He's like a rock star," Graver said, noting that Gee's energy is contagious and he brings positive attention to the projects he champions.

The University District was on a downward spiral in 1995 when Gee and then-Mayor Greg Lashutka kicked off a major neighborhood revitalization initiative. Momentum for revitalization has grown, and Gee is likely to ride a wave of renewal.

With the opening of South Campus Gateway, improvements in municipal services and other investments in construction and renovation, students are returning to the neighborhood.

"The occupancy levels (in the predominantly

student neighborhood) are reaching a high that we haven't seen in six or seven years," Graver said. His company, Buckeye Real Estate, is the area's largest owner and manager of student rental housing.

"In 2007, we built a new building on East 11th Avenue, and this spring we will start construction of another new building on East 11th," he said. "That's a testament to what's going on here."

Graver noted that other property owners are investing significant dollars in renovating their rental properties. "There is a higher standard for (student) housing due to competition."

Reinforcing the private investment has been the city's commitment of more than \$900,000 for a new street lighting system completed in February 2008 in the predominantly student neighborhood east of High Street.

In addition, the city and the university are jointly funding construction of a new \$4.4 million Neighborhood Policing Center on East 11th Avenue. The center is scheduled to open late this summer and will house the fourth precinct substation for the Columbus Division of Police, offices for the Community Crime Patrol and city code enforcement staff, a satellite office for University Police, and community meeting space.

South Campus Gateway has anchored High Street around 11th Avenue, while new construction in 2007 added significant retail and entertainment space on High Street near Lane Avenue.

Buffalo Wild Wings abandoned its original location at High and Woodruff, and in mid-2007 opened a new two-story, 8,000-square-foot restaurant on the northwest corner of Lane and High. In turn, Panda Express opened in a new building on the old BW3 site.

Just south of Lane Avenue on High Street, Scott Schiff in 2007 constructed a new building with five retail tenants: Noodles & Co., Radio Shack, Diaspora Korean restaurant, UniversiTees clothing, and soon Zaxby's restaurant.

"The vacancy rate in the commercial sector (of the University District) is the lowest that I can remember," Grado said.

One challenge to the commercial vitality in 2008 will be construction work on streetscape improvements along High Street from Lane Avenue north to Arcadia Avenue, including utility relocation and separation of storm and sanitary sewers. Portions of High Street will be limited to two lanes through at least mid-2009.

City and community leaders continue to pay attention to concerns in the residential neighborhoods farther from the university campus, where residents hope to attract more homeownership.

Last November, City Council members Priscilla Tyson and Maryellen

O'Shaughnessy distributed a five-page memo to city and university leaders listing a number of possible projects to improve the northern portion of the University District.

Among the suggestions were a joint city-university commitment to enhancements of Tuttle Park and Glen Echo Ravine, cooperation with citizens to better deal with litter, and creation of a conservation district or neighborhood investment district. Discussion of these projects will continue through 2008.

In the Weinland Park neighborhood, redevelopment of the 20-acre Columbus Coated Fabrics "brownfield" site is moving forward.

In mid-March 2008, the city and Wagenbrenner Development Co. announced a deal under which the city will contribute \$14 million in infrastructure improvements on and adjacent to the site along North Grant Avenue, between East Fifth and East 11th avenues.

Wagenbrenner has committed to

building more than 500 moderately priced condominiums and apartments, a community center and a small park.

Campus Partners, the non-profit redevelopment corporation which focuses on the University District, initially obtained an option to acquire the site and conducted environmental assessments for potential contamination.

Working collaboratively with Campus Partners, the city took title to the site in late 2006. Campus Partners then oversaw demolition of the deteriorated buildings on the site during 2007. It also worked with the city on the successful application for \$3 million in Clean Ohio funds for site clean-up.

When preparing its proposed project, Wagenbrenner was guided by the Weinland Park Neighborhood Plan adopted by the city in mid-2006.

*Steve Sterrett is the community relations director for Campus Partners.*

University District



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# Public, private investment continues to restore King-Lincoln District to former glory

By MELANIE MCINTYRE  
Daily Reporter Staff Writer

Four years ago, Mayor Michael Coleman announced a plan to revitalize the King-Lincoln District, a neighborhood bounded by Jefferson Avenue on the west, Ohio Avenue on the east, Broad Street to the south and Atcheson Street to the north.

In its prime, it was home to numerous retail, dining and entertainment establishments, as well as hotels, medical offices and churches. However, construction of Interstate 71 ravaged the community and its population now hovers around 16,000 people.

Today, though, the neighborhood is making a comeback and Boyce Safford, director of Columbus' Development

Department, said the area is poised to become "a regional attraction for arts, entertainment and culture."

One of the King-Lincoln District's most iconic properties is the Lincoln Theatre located at 751 E. Long St.

It was built through a collaboration between the Grand United Order of Odd Fellows, a black fraternal organization; Carl Anderson, a black construction company owner; and Al Jackson, a black real estate owner and entrepreneur who was determined to provide the community with a theater that catered specifically to black patrons and performers.

The Lincoln opened in November 1928 (as the Ogden Theater) and over the years hosted musical legends such as Duke Ellington, Count Basie, Miles

Davis, Etta James, James Brown and Sammy Davis Jr.

In October 2007, it was announced that the Columbus Association for the Performing Arts would manage the theater's restoration, which will cost \$13 million.

The city and Franklin County have each committed \$4 million to the project and worked with local businesses to raise private and government funding for the theater's reconstruction and operation.

Once the restoration is complete, the 60,000-square-foot theater will seat 450 people and feature an expanded stage and orchestra pit, a new west side entrance with a "jazz lobby," state-of-the-art lighting, sound, digital projection and rigging equipment, and fully restored Egyptian stenciling throughout.

The building's second-floor ballroom will receive new flooring, making it functional for rehearsals. Work on the theater is expected to end in April 2009.

Meanwhile, businesses and agencies continue to move into the \$6 million Gateway Building located at the corner of Long Street and Hamilton Avenue.

Among current tenants are Gideon Development Partners, which is co-developing the building with the Daimler Group; Homeport, Columbus Housing Partnership's real estate arm; and the Columbus Department of Public Safety's Internal Affairs Bureau and Accident Investigation Unit.

The building offers 60,000 square feet of office and retail space.

On the residential front, the blighted and crime-ridden Whitney Young Apartments at 761 Mount Vernon Ave. are being replaced by The Whitney, a new 28-unit condominium development.

The new, two- and three-bedroom townhouse condos range in price from \$159,000 to \$259,000 and are being developed by the Whitney Young Collaborative — a partnership between the Alpha Rho Lambda chapter of the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc. and the non-profit affiliates of Shiloh Baptist and Trinity Baptist churches.

Ground broke on the \$6.4 million project in September 2007, but its completion date remains uncertain.

The city bought the Whitney Young Apartments from the Department of Housing and Urban Development in 2004 for \$100, paid \$123,000 for their demolition, and has put an additional \$364,000 toward road investments in the area.

Other ongoing residential developments in the King-Lincoln District are the North of Broad project, which will feature up to 44 market-rate residential units along 20th and 21st streets between Broad and Mt. Vernon Ave.; the Monroe Cluster, a residential/commercial mixed-use project located at the corner of Monroe and Long streets; and Hamilton Park Condominiums, which will feature 12 market-rate one and two-bedroom units at the southeast corner of Long and Hamilton.

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# Victorian Village offers serenity amidst bustle of surrounding city

By JIM MENGEL  
For The Daily Reporter

Nearly surrounded by a sprawling university, the dynamic Short North Arts district, and a blossoming —and loud— Arena District entertainment area, Victorian Village steadfastly strives to offer a slower-paced alternative atmosphere for living and relaxing. And for every facet of that lifestyle, it takes the passion of the people who have settled here to preserve the historic architecture, the beauty of the tree lined streets, and its beloved park.

This neighborhood of more than 1,000 residential structures was once among the richest in the city, built in the late 19th century by the well-to-do of Columbus. However, it would take another generation of settlers to rescue the neighborhood from neglect as newer development moved farther and farther away from downtown.

Thanks to the efforts of the Victorian Village Society, the Victorian Village Commission, and many historical preservation pioneers during the 1970s, the village regained its attractiveness and became a livable and affordable urban area able to accommodate a wide variety of residents from all income levels and social backgrounds.

And with the area's rebirth, the society began inviting all of Columbus to visit the community by staging the annual Victorian Village Tour of Homes and Gardens on the third Sunday of September.

Since then, the society has invested the proceeds of the tour — the 34th of which will take place on Sept. 21 — into several projects bettering the area.

For instance, since May of 2007, the society has committed \$2,500 to the installation of 21 bicycle bollards in Goodale Park — a joint effort between the society, The Short North Foundation, The Short North Special Improvement District, and Comfest, which is the annual celebration of diversity in and around Goodale Park.

Another \$7,000 (\$5,000 from tour proceeds and \$2,000 from Comfest organizers) has been appropriated for furniture and remodeling of public space in the society's headquarters in Goodale Park.

Certainly the pride of Victorian Village is its southern anchor, Goodale Park, which was given to the city in 1851 by Columbus' s first doctor, Lincoln Goodale. It is the city's oldest municipal

park and greatly contributes to the relaxed lifestyle of the village.

The redevelopment and preservation of the park and the neighborhood represent a splendid partnership between the residents and the government. But today, the city of Columbus is financially unable to provide Goodale Park with the level of service it needs. Although a small grant is available through the city, the bulk of upkeep expenses will be borne by the society and the Friends of Goodale Park, a non-profit volunteer organization that has fostered more than \$2 million worth of improvements to the property over the last 20 years.

Grant money from the society and FGP will pay for a private watering service (estimated to cost \$4,000) and volunteers will donate and plant flowers.

However, maintaining Goodale Park is not the only obstacle the village is facing.

The society provides leadership and on-going guidance to The Overall Traffic Management Plan, an eight-year old cooperative agreement between the city of Columbus, the Ohio Department of Transportation, and the historic neighborhoods of the Near North side to mitigate the impact of automobile, truck and bus traffic through the historic districts.

In addition to financially assisting Columbus' plan for the construction of 10 new traffic islands on Neil Avenue, the society also expects to finance planters and water for the islands, and visible, historically-appropriate markers that clearly identify Victorian Village at all points of entry.

Also on the agenda for 2008 is assisting FGP with the restoration or replacement of the magnificent, but deteriorating, gateways to Goodale Park — a project expected to cost more than \$50,000.

As mentioned earlier, the newest challenge to the tranquility of the neighborhood comes from the booming entertainment businesses of the nearby Arena District. Therefore, the society is providing expertise in monitoring noise levels and working with nightclub owners to find reasonable solutions, allowing the abutting lifestyles to co-exist in harmony.

*Jim Mengel is the administrator of the Victorian Village Society.*

# German Village first in Ohio to earn Preserve America designation

By KATHARINE MOORE  
For The Daily Reporter

The last 12 months in German Village have been filled with pride, excitement, and a rare amount of development activity for a district on the National Register of Historic Places.

In May 2007, Columbus Mayor Mike Coleman was notified by the White House that German Village had been selected as the first neighborhood in Ohio for the prestigious Preserve America designation, which recognizes community efforts to preserve and enjoy their priceless national heritage. (Other cities have been designated, but never a neighborhood.)

German Village was ranked for its success in using its historical assets for economic development and community revitalization, and encouraging people to experience and appreciate local historic resources through education and heritage tourism programs.

German Village Society Board President Mary Cusick described the designation as "a chance to step back and see German Village from a national perspective," as well as a moment to reflect on the achievements of the community activists who formed the society in 1960.

"Our founders dreamed awfully big, and they weren't afraid of the work it took to make those dreams come true," Cusick said during a neighborhood celebration breakfast attended by Coleman and the residents of German Village.

Currently, the German Village community is witnessing an undertaking that was last experienced more than 70 years ago — the addition of 20 new homes in a one-year span.

Bob and Jason Taggart, the developers, negotiated the tough architectural review process and obtained approval to build an innovative project designed by Behal, Sampson and Dietz Architecture and Construction on the southwest corner of Beck and Grant Streets.

In the early 1900s, the existing warehouse was a small neighborhood bakery owned by the Lang family who lived adjacent to the bakery; their home eventually was razed to make way for later warehouse additions.

In following years, the warehouse was occupied by the Tip Top and Pennington Bakeries, Columbus Dispatch circulation trucks, Ballet Met and, most recently, Retail Planning Associates.

The project, called Beck Place, is well underway, with the conversion of the existing 41,600-square-foot

warehouse into eight unique warehouse lofts in progress.

The later, non-historic additions have been demolished and eight townhomes on Grant Avenue and four warehouse lofts on Jaeger Street will replace them. The old bakery smokestack will remain.

The average unit size will be more than 2,400 square feet and all units will have a two-car attached garage. The homes are limited to two and three bedrooms and most include lower levels, terraces, and courtyards. The vertical townhomes and some warehouse lofts will offer elevators as an option.

Beck Place will have secure, rear-gated access while the front retains pedestrian entry courtyards in keeping with the friendly, pedestrian-scaled German Village atmosphere.

Sales and Marketing Director Rosalie Goodsell, of Coldwell Banker King Thompson, predicts the development will appeal to German Village residents and suburbanites who have been eyeing the possibility of moving into town.

But all of the news hasn't been residential; commerce continues to thrive in German Village, as well.

Pisacia Vera, an upscale bakery noted for its treats in a recent New York Times article, opened in the Third Street space that was formerly Thurns Bakery. Yosick's Artisan Chocolates is serving kosher chocolates and delicious pastries on South Fifth Street, and Bakery Gingham, a hip cupcake factory, opened a retail space with a kitsch edge and a fiercely loyal clientele on Mohawk Street.

Judith Politi Interior Design Inc. purchased a handsome historic building on Thurman Avenue for its headquarters, and Metroscap, a black-and-white photography showroom took the space across from Lindey's Restaurant, allowing patrons to shop, dine and stroll without ever moving a car.

An ideal occasion to discover, or rediscover, the beauty of German Village is during the annual Haus und Garten Tour on June 29. The 49th annual event will feature 13 properties. Tickets will be available at all Central Ohio Kroger Stores and online at [www.GermanVillage.com](http://www.GermanVillage.com).

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





# Clintonville's latest projects include \$3.5 million condos

By MELANIE MCINTYRE  
Daily Reporter Staff Writer

The face of Clintonville, located just six miles north of downtown Columbus, has been changing due to a mix of new development and renovations.

One of the area's most significant residential developments is the Terraces on Walhalla, located at the corner of High Street and Weber Road, said Ernie Hartong, president of the Clintonville Chamber of Commerce.

The four-story condominium development will feature 20 one-, two-, and three-bedroom units spanning 1,000- to 1,650-square feet.

Units, some of which will have a view of the Walhalla Ravine, start at \$179,900.

The \$3.5 million project is being developed by the Walhalla Development Group, whose members include architect/developer Tim Welsh of Urban Vision Properties LLC, Hanno Schickram and J.C. Hanks; it is slated for completion by year-end 2008.

Meanwhile, several credit unions and banks have either been built in Clintonville, or undergone renovations, over the last 12 months.

Kemba Financial Credit Union's new Clintonville branch — complete with a drive-thru ATM and drive-thru teller windows — opened at 4311 N. High St. in January.

Cooper State Bank built a new branch at the corner of Como

Avenue and North High, and CME Federal Credit Union renovated an existing building for its branch that opened in September 2007 at 4545 N. High St., Hartong said.

Two area shopping centers also were refurbished.

Landscaping, additional parking spaces, and construction on its west side helped spruce up the 54-acre Graceland Shopping Center built by Casto in 1954, while the Hadler Cos. added brick and stucco accents to Indianola Plaza, a 76,000-square-foot strip mall built in 1965.

Another significant redevelopment project in Clintonville was the renovation of Whetstone Community Recreation Center, Hartong said.

The \$5.6 million project, which began in Summer 2007, will include mechanical upgrades, interior and exterior enhancements, and improvements to the adjacent parking and playground areas.

The facility is expected to open this summer.

Last year, the city of Columbus began \$4.7 million worth of sanitary sewer improvements in three Clintonville neighborhoods: the Bill Moose Run area, the Como Avenue/Milton Avenue area and the Deland Avenue/Zeller Road area.

The improvements vary — from replacement of existing lines to the addition of new manholes — but all are scheduled for completion by year's end.

On the horizon is a 2.5-acre project on the northeast corner of the North High and Henderson Road intersection.

In February, Henderson Partners LLC, an affiliate of Metropolitan Partners LLC, secured commercial planned development zoning approval on the site, which is currently home to a 40,000-square-foot office building.

Tentative plans call for a 5,500-square-foot retail building and 7,000 square feet of additional retail space in place of an existing office building.



# Grange, Red Roof Inns display commitment to Brewery District

By MELANIE MCINTYRE  
Daily Reporter Staff Writer

If the number of planned expansions and corporate relocations in the area are any indication, the Brewery District is, at the very least, a business-friendly community.

In May 2007, Columbus-based Grange Insurance announced it would expand its downtown campus with the acquisition of the Brewer's Yard properties at 585 and 605 S. Front St.

Grange's headquarters are located at 650 S. Front St. (where it has been since 1949) and a company-owned parking garage sits across the street.

At the time of the purchase, Grange said it considered the Brewer's Yard properties — which also include a previously purchased Salvation Army property at 570 S. Front St. — a "strategic real estate acquisition" that would provide the company with additional long-term expansion options.

"Acquisition of the Brewer's Yard properties is not only a good business investment for us, but also helps the area become more attractive to other businesses and prospective tenants with the addition of more parking in the new garage Grange is constructing," said its president and chief executive officer Phil Urban.

He was referencing the company's plans to make the Salvation Army property the site of its new 1,000-space parking garage. The warehouse on it would be preserved for further development, though.

Cue The Edwards Cos.

In Fall 2007, its subsidiary, Eclipse Real Estate Group Inc., announced it would be converting the 51,000-square-foot building into more than 50 condominiums.

Roughly two-thirds of the condos are expected to be efficiencies or one-bedroom units in the \$130,000 to \$175,000 price range, while the

remainder will be two-bedroom units ranging from \$250,000 to \$325,000.

The project's is slated for completion in late 2008.

Meanwhile, the 66,000-square-foot Kroger store located at 150 W. Sycamore St. is planning an expansion of its covered dining area.

Currently, the grocery has a 2,000-square-foot outdoor patio, but the space will be enclosed "to make it usable year-round," said Dale Hollandsworth, a spokesman for Kroger.

The Brewery District Commission verbally approved the project during a meeting in February, but it had not been green-lighted by the city of Columbus' planning division as of press time.

Hollandsworth said construction would likely begin upon the city's approval.

In early November 2007, the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission moved its offices to the Brewery District, setting up shop at 111 Liberty St.

Its executive director, Chester Jourdan, said the move from 285 E. Main St., where it had been located for 25 years, enabled MORPC to "think about new community partners and urban renewal initiatives."

Later that same month, Red Roof Inn announced that its company headquarters would be relocating to the district during First Quarter 2008.

Its new offices, located at 605 S. Front St., house the accounting, legal, franchising, construction, training and administrative departments.

"We were founded here 35 years ago and we are excited to return to our roots," said Joe Wheeling, chief executive officer of Red Roof Inn.

The city of Columbus' Department of Development awarded Red Roof Inn a jobs growth incentive equal to 30 percent of the withholding for new employees as motivation to move to the district.



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# Redeveloped mall, streetcars vital part of plan for Downtown's growth

By MELANIE MCINTYRE  
Daily Reporter Staff Writer

Development, particularly the commercial sort, is thriving in downtown Columbus as several significant projects continue to gain momentum.

As of January 2008, about 70,000 square feet of space in the renovated Lazarus building, at West Town and South High streets, has been leased for offices and The Ohio State University's Urban Art Space. The latter, which opened in February, occupies about 10,000 square feet on the building's ground floor and features two performance areas and a conference room.

OSU contributed \$200,000 toward the space's renovation.

Tenant recruitment for 50,000 square feet of retail space in the Lazarus building — the third phase of its renovation — is slated to begin in mid-2008, according to city officials.

Meanwhile, City Center Mall, just across the street, awaits redevelopment.

In July 2007, the city ended its lease with the mall's owners and sued for thousands in unpaid rent. The day before an eviction hearing in late September, TL-Columbus — which consists of Simon Property Group and General Motors Pension Trust — sold the building and rights to a 0.933-acre parcel at the northeast corner of South

High and East Rich streets to Capitol South Community Urban Redevelopment Corp. for \$2.88 million.

"In the coming months, we expect to present the first phase of a redeveloped City Center," said Mayor Michael Coleman during his State of the City address in March.

The city has teamed with Nationwide Realty Investors — which developed the nearby Arena District — for the project.

"It is our concept to transform the High Street side of City Center into a retail destination around a town square at the point where Town Street meets High Street," Coleman said. "We will open up High Street by demolishing the cavernous City Center walkway. ...We've still got a lot of work to do, but we are making progress."

Coleman also spoke of a plan to reinvigorate the High Street Corridor.

"Today, there is 152,000 square feet of vacant retail space in the High Street corridor and 12 acres of vacant lots and surface parking," he said. "These vacancies scar this corridor and it's made worse by the space of City Center." He then proposed the creation of a "Mile On High" district to help increase the city's focus on infusing High Street with retail, office and housing developments.

"The Mile on High district will include a specific plan and a toolbox

of aggressive incentives, working capital loans, facade improvement grants, new parking requirements, and better transit and pedestrian options," he said, adding that it also will require special zoning changes to increase development density.

Substantial redevelopment already has taken root in the heart of downtown with the \$22 million Broad & High project. For the project, Casto is converting three buildings at the intersection of High and Broad streets into a mixed-use complex featuring retail, office and residential space.

Upon completion, Broad & High — already home to a series of light-emitting diode screens and digital ticker tapes — will feature The Original Soup Man restaurant, Cafe Lola, Paul Werth Associates, an NBC live broadcast studio with a glass facade, and luxury condominiums (8 on the Square) priced between \$219,000 and \$1 million. The project is expected to open during the first half of the year.

Progress also is being made on the Scioto Mile, a park that will stretch from North Bank Park to the Whittier Peninsula.

In March, the city announced it had selected Messer Construction Co. as the project's construction manager. A completion date was set for Fall 2011.

Coleman has said the park will have several fountains, a four-foot-wide water canal, an outdoor concert

venue, a restaurant with outdoor terrace dining, benches, swings, chess and dominoes tables, and free wireless Internet access.

On the residential front, a seven-acre neighborhood is being developed by the Edwards Cos. on nine quarter-blocks between North Fourth and Sixth streets and East Gay and Long streets. When completed in five to six years, the 265-unit project will feature a mix of townhouse styles designed by Lupton Rausch Architects Inc. Prices will range from \$140,000 to \$650,000.

Additionally, Lifestyle Communities this summer will break ground on more than 200 residential units along Front Street between Town and Rich streets. The \$25 million project — intended to be accessible to the city's young professionals — will consist of 130 apartments (renting for \$750 to \$990 per month), 76 condos (priced at \$125,000 to \$250,000), and more than 300 on-site parking spaces, Coleman has said.

Despite the recent housing slump, residences in downtown Columbus remain popular with empty-nesters and first-time homebuyers, said Boyce Safford, the city's development director. Temporary residences in the central city also are popular, as evidenced by business at Residence Inn Columbus Downtown, which opened on Feb. 25 in the former Buckeye Savings & Loan building.

"By the time we officially opened,

we had already booked \$400,000 in business," said Robert Kennedy, the hotel's general manager.

Located at 36 E. Gay St., the renovated 126-room high-rise — with 40-foot brass-plated ceilings and marble floors and columns — retains the architectural integrity and classic revival style of the original structure, which was built in 1925. Prior to its \$24 million, 18-month restoration, the building was vacant for more than 10 years.

"People are starting to say downtown Columbus could be a good place for boutique hotels," Safford said.


At press time, one of Coleman's most ambitious plans for the city's core is the addition of a \$103 million streetcar line from Mound Street to the Ohio Union in the University District.

"Streetcars will help us connect people to our stores, our restaurants, the life downtown and neighborhoods to each other," Coleman said during the SOTC address.

"Most of all, it will give the working man and woman the freedom to get to work without digging deeper into their pockets for gasoline," he added.

Coleman plans to send a proposal to City Council before year's end calling for a 4 percent surcharge on tickets for most concerts and sporting events within six blocks of the 2.8-mile streetcar route to pay for it.





# Eclectic mix of entertainment, shopping and dining make Short North a destination spot

By JOHN ANGELO  
For The Daily Reporter

The Short North has been buzzing with commercial and residential development activity, and is fast on its way to becoming the SoHo of the Midwest.

In the last 12 months, the mile-long strip has seen strong additions to its key categories of art, fashion, home decor, dining and entertainment, as well as dramatic starts in residential construction — all of which have led to a flurry of regional and national media attention unprecedented in the Short North's history.

On the art scene, three new galleries emerged and one shifted location to the higher-foot-traffic south end of the district.

Rivet (1200 N. High St.), Art Exchange (17 Brickel St.) and Terra Gallery (8 E. Poplar Ave.) all made their debuts, while Mahan Gallery transitioned from 1042 N. High St. to 717 N. High St.

Last year saw the launch of Tigertree (771-C N. High St.), the Emperor's Newest Clothes (636 N. High St.), Fibres (791 N. High St.), Ivy Hill (716 N. High St.) and Re-N-Vintage (1108 N. High St.).

Each of the uniquely stocked fashion boutiques adds to the plethora of options that also include Substance, G&Co., Rowe, Jinny, Dr. Mojoe, Retrocat and numerous others.

In fact, the New York Times "Style" magazine raved that "Columbus has an unexpected new profile as a Midwestern style capital," adding that the transformation has occurred primarily in the Short North.

Home decor has long been a stronghold for the Short North, as shops such as Roche Bobois, Grandview Mercantile, ReVue and Four Winds International have anchored the district for years.

The newest destination, Flower Child (989 N. High St.) opened its doors in 2007. The 7,000-square-foot retail space features the most vibrant collection of 1930s to 1970s furniture, fashion and accessories in the region. The shop

is the sister store to the wildly successful original in Cleveland.

Culinary offerings have never been stronger in the Short North.

Stalwarts such as Rigsby's and the Burgundy Room still blend with the off-the-wall offerings of one-ups such as Betty's and Skully's.

In 2007, Rosendales (793 N. High St.) took the city, and the district, by storm. Also making splashes last year were Cameron Mitchell's latest concept Marcella's Ristorante, Pizzeria & Wine Bar (615 N. High St.), Jeni's Ice Cream (714 N. High St.), La Fogata Mexican restaurant (790 N. High St.), and Starbucks (601 N. High St.).

Marcella's and Starbucks, along with the UPS Store (605 N. High St.), filled newly created spaces at the Yukon Building, which had been vacant for several years.

On the residential front, construction has begun on Jackson on High, an eight-story condominium project, and the pre-ground-breaking party for Ibiza, the 11-story condominium project at the corner of Hubbard Avenue and High Street, was planned to coincide with the April Gallery Hop.

In 2007, CNNMoney.com rated the Short North the best Ohio community in which to retire, saying "High Street, the (district's) main stretch, is lined with trees, galleries, funky restaurants and 17 beautiful lighted arches."

The article went on to say that the new breed of retiree is drawn to the neighborhood's convenience, diversity and energy.

The first half of 2008 will see numerous new projects hit the strip, including: Paradise Garage, a specialty bike shop at 941 N. High St.; Liquid, a performance venue/bar at 1100 N. High St.; Bar 23, a diner/bar with al fresco dining on the Cap at 584 N. High St.; and 84 Bistro, a hip diner strategically located in the combined spaces that formally housed the Coffee Table and 8 at the northwest corner of the intersection of Buttles Avenue and High (731 and 733 N. High St.).

*John Angelo is executive director of the Short North Business Association.*

SECTOR 2

# Northwestern Franklin County

Grandview Heights • Upper Arlington • Hilliard • Dublin • Worthington

## Mixed-use development would bring additional revenue to Grandview Heights

By MELANIE MCINTYRE  
Daily Reporter Staff Writer

Development in Grandview Heights has tapered off recently, but that could change if plans for a substantial mixed-use development come to fruition.

During the last 12 months, the city hasn't experienced very much building activity, said Patrick Bowman, director of administration and development for Grandview Heights.

However, Nationwide Realty Investors is looking to construct an office/retail/residential project on land formerly occupied by a Big Bear warehouse — and city officials couldn't be more pleased.

"It's the story of our year," Bowman said, adding that NRI has pitched a "terrific project."

The development, dubbed "Grandview Yard," would be situated on a 100-acre site bordered by Third Avenue on the north, Goodale Boulevard on the south, railroad tracks to the east, and an alley near Northwest Boulevard on the west.

NRI already has purchased 85 acres in that area, Bowman said.

Though he insists the project is in the early stages of development, Bowman said that in addition to thousands of feet of office and retail space, the project is likely to feature 800 residential units, hotels and a fitness facility.

Perhaps most importantly, Grandview Yard could generate considerable tax revenue, as it would be half the city's commercial base. The Big Bear warehouse, which was vacated in 2004, had provided Grandview with roughly \$400,000 in annual income tax.

Meanwhile, three other properties along Goodale Boulevard have continued to gain tenants.

Combined, they offer 94,000 square feet of office space.

A newly-constructed building at 1398 W. Goodale is now home to marketing and design firm Conrad, Phillips & Vutech and graphic design firm Salvato, Coe + Gabor.

And former warehouses at 1400 and 1404 W. Goodale now are occupied by landscape architecture, planning, and graphic design firm The Edge Group; the law firm of Manley, Deas, Kochalski; Blue Pencil LLC, a communications and multimedia design company; HealthLinx, an executive recruiting firm for health care professionals; and Integrate Inc., an advertising firm.

During the second half of 2007, Grandview Heights' planning commission approved Metropolitan Holdings LLC's plans for a four-story, mixed-use building at 1250 Grandview Ave.; it is not yet under construction.

However, another mixed-use development — Santer Communities' 1200 Grandview — was completed last year.

The 23,000-square-foot building named for its location has a lobby and reception area, office condominium, and secure parking garage on the first floor and four condos ranging from 1,537- to 2,248-square feet on the second and third floors.

Last year, Grandview also was in discussions with Bear Creek Capital regarding redevelopment of a property at the corner of Dublin Road and Grandview Avenue, but "those plans are off the table at this point," Bowman said.

The site was being considered for a 400,000-square-foot office space, but it requires environmental mitigation, making it less unappealing than many other sites.



# Unified Development Ordinance provides streamlined process for new development in Upper Arlington

By CHAD GIBSON  
For The Daily Reporter

In 2007, Upper Arlington continued a robust trend of community reinvestment and redevelopment.

Although it is a landlocked, inner-ring suburb with a limited geographic area of less than 10 square miles, the city posted \$61.2 million in new construction value for the year. Perhaps surprisingly, a majority of that amount is derived from residential improvements — a fact that is especially significant because of the lack of undeveloped ground within the city.

Upper Arlington's "big three" draws — location, great schools, and safe neighborhoods — continue to power that trend, and allow the community to remain competitive with other suburbs that have more contemporary housing.

Although somewhat lower than the previous five-year average of \$68.2 million, the 2007 construction value corresponds with Upper Arlington's long-standing reputation as a high-quality, economically stable community that is a terrific place to raise a family and do business.

Commercial activity also remained strong in 2007, with the award-winning Unified Development Ordinance providing a streamlined process for new development.

First Community Village continues a large-scale renovation of its 31-acre "life stage"-oriented campus, as the Manor Home portion of the development nears completion.

The new 15,000-square-foot Central Ohio Medicine offices at 4030 W. Henderson Road were a result of a collaborative effort between the city's own Community Improvement Corp. and a private developer.

Two new projects along Tremont Road — Walgreens and Tremont Place — have helped foster quality mixed-use redevelopment momentum in the Kingsdale vicinity.

The Arlington Falls office condominium project at Riverside and Horizons Drives continues to be a major success for the city, as a fourth two-story building nears completion, and permits for the fifth and final building were pending as of press time.

At the southeast corner of Reed and Henderson Roads, the new Arlington Pointe mixed-use project is thriving with restaurant, retail, and office tenants.

Chase Bank has received formal approval to build a new

3,700-square-foot facility with a drive-thru at 1431 W. Lane Ave., the former home of a Shell gas station.

The Sciotoview Shopping Center at Riverside Drive and Fishinger Road received a much-needed facelift with various site upgrades.

Long & Wilcox received approval for a 13-unit condominium building at 1783 Ridgecliff Road that will complement the 56-unit Arlington Crossing condominium development nearing completion next door.

St. Andrew Catholic Church purchased the old Masonic Lodge at 3880 Reed Rd. and completely revamped the building for use as a parish activity center.

With such a variety of redevelopment activity occurring within UA, the 10-member Development Department team led by Director Dean Sivinski continues to process a heavy workload.

A number of major redevelopment prospects are on the horizon in UA, and the city's Master Plan provides the blueprint for realizing such opportunities.

Regency Centers has submitted a preliminary development plan application that includes a significant rebuild of the long-underperforming Kingsdale Shopping Center. City staff is working diligently with Regency Centers and others to ensure the project includes a compact mix of uses that will foster a pedestrian-friendly "town center" environment.

Whole Foods has acquired the Wild Oats Market at 1555 W. Lane Ave. and expansion plans are in the preliminary discussion stages.

The Shoppes at Lane Avenue was purchased in 2007 by Ramco-Gershens and city representatives have already forged a positive relationship with the new owners.

Plans for the replacement of Fire Station No. 72 at 3861 Reed Road also have been unveiled, with construction scheduled to commence in 2008.

Strong leadership and forward-thinking decision making from newly elected Council President Donald Leach Jr. coupled with the knowledge and experience of City Manager Virginia Barney is helping to maintain high-quality city services with an emphasis on fiscal responsibility.

City Council has assembled a Historic Preservation Task Force of community experts to study the possible benefits of implementing

special regulations for historic structures.

Recently hired Director of Economic Development, Matthew Shad has sustained a business-friendly and incentive-based approach, which encourages new businesses to locate in UA while providing for the expansion and retention of existing UA companies.

*Chad Gibson is the senior planning officer for the city of Upper Arlington.*

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# Hilliard provides employers with strong location, ammenities and workforce

By DAVID MEEKS  
For The Daily Reporter

Perhaps the best way to describe Hilliard today is to paraphrase the memorable Oldsmobile commercials by stating "this is not your father's Hilliard." If you haven't visited Hilliard lately, you probably wouldn't recognize our bustling community.

The sprawling vacant land along Interstate 270 has been made accessible by new functional and attractive boulevard roadways lined with retail and commercial development.

World-class companies, including BMW Financial Services are now headquartered in Hilliard, and more companies are coming every month.

The community expects to add 1,000 jobs in the next five years based on projects completed or approved in 2007. Those jobs will boost the local payroll by more than \$39 million.

The new landscape includes more office buildings, medical enterprises and an array of other businesses that are redefining the I-270 gateway to our city. That is a result of the \$40 million we invested in critical infrastructure to literally pave the way for new investment.

This year we will break ground on the final leg of Britton Parkway, creating a beltway around the beltway from Cemetery Road in Hilliard north to Riverside Drive in Dublin. Completion of the Britton project will give employers access to both I-270 interchanges at Tuttle Crossing and Fishinger/Cemetery Road.

The work is being done with a keen eye to detail, investing in parks, landscaping and other improvements to enhance the curb appeal of the city while providing residents with the kind

of quality-of-life amenities that will make Hilliard unique among its peers.

But Hilliard also is thinking strategically about the future. Study after study shows that while the aging of the Baby Boomer generation presents its challenges, so, too, does it present opportunities.

The city is poised for those advantages with Erickson Retirement Community's Hickory Chase project. That project alone promises to yield \$30 million in annual payroll from 850 jobs, \$226 million in new construction and \$80 million in construction payroll.

With Hickory Chase as the hub, expanding out from the center are related industries and development such as the Altercare assisted living facility and the partially age-restricted Tremont Club condominium community nearby.

How wise is the investment in these retirement-centered businesses and industries?

At the annual meeting of the Columbus Area Chamber of Commerce, we learned that retiring Boomers will be a valuable source of educated, trained, experienced and relatively inexpensive workers for employers looking for ways to meet an anticipated shortage of workers.

With Hilliard's predominantly college-educated population and an average age of 33.5 years of age, that means employers can come here to find the workforce to meet their labor demands.

The development in SOMA Sub-Area 3 along Trueman Boulevard is proving to be another complement to our Boomer strategy.

Conveniently located Home Depot and Target stores meet a critical retail demand of all our residents, but so too

do developments such as The Cardinal Orthopaedic Institute, Mt. Carmel Urgent Care, American Health Network and DeGuzman Orthodontics.

Nearby, we are constructing two new buildings, one of which will be the headquarters for Easter Seals of Central and Southeast Ohio and the other will house Javin LLC, an owner and operator of nursing homes throughout Ohio.

But it isn't just senior-related businesses that see Hilliard as a place to grow, the city also is attracting cutting edge companies such as EchoStar/DishNetwork.

The company opened an

experimental operation by deploying a 15,000-square-foot call center in mid-2007. That venture produced a workforce of 150.

By the end of the year, the company committed to the remaining square footage of a building that was vacated by Discover Card Services and that doubled the workforce.

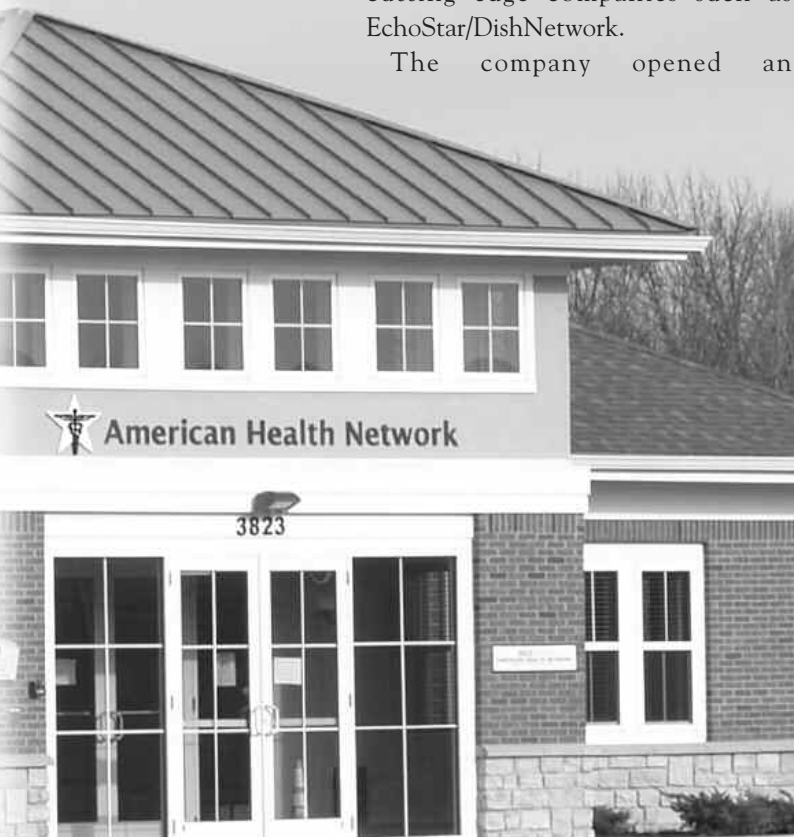
That development is an example of how we are getting optimum use of all available space. One Mill Run is another example.

At the beginning of 2007, our only Class-A office high-rise was nearly 70 percent vacant. However, by the end of 2007, the building was 70 percent occupied.

Given the state of the Central Ohio economy, One Mill Run and our partnership with its agents Grubb, Ellis/Adena, we are writing the book on what can be achieved when the public and private sector work together toward a common community goal.

No, it's probably not your father's Oldsmobile, but we can darn well assure you that we are not the Hilliard of your father's era either. Hilliard is a community on the move and the future grows brighter with each day.

*David Meeks is the economic development director for the city of Hilliard.*



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# Dublin goes high tech with addition of new hospital, innovation center

By COLLEEN GILGER  
For The Daily Reporter

The Jan. 8 opening of Dublin Methodist Hospital not only marked the arrival of the first non-profit hospital in Central Ohio in 20 years, it also culminated another successful year of new development and expansion plans in the city of Dublin.

The \$200 million state-of-the-art hospital will bring 500 new jobs to the city, and has resulted in a flurry of medical office buildings being built in the footprint of Dublin's next-generation technology park — the Central Ohio Innovation Center.

The 1,500-acre COIC is being created by the city to attract new businesses in the bioscience, information technology, and research and development sectors.

Meanwhile, Ohio's largest corporation and the 19th largest in the country — Cardinal Health — has announced plans to expand its Dublin headquarters by breaking ground for its \$43 million, 250,000-square-foot west campus.

Dublin worked with the state of Ohio and the Columbus-Franklin County Finance Authority

to assist Cardinal Health with its expansion plans.

Dublin plans to complete the final phase of Emerald Parkway, which not only will serve Cardinal Health's expanded headquarters, but also open up additional land for more economic development in the city.

Likewise, other infrastructure improvements planned by the city have benefited or will benefit future development in the area.

Dublin is helping fund a new interchange ramp, which will provide access to the hospital, and has pledged \$52 million in interchange improvements for the state Route 161/Post Road interchange along U.S. 33, at the gateway to the COIC.

The city also is working on a joint venture with Columbus and Franklin County to widen Tuttle Crossing Boulevard between Wilcox Road and Interstate 270. The project is scheduled for completion in the fall of 2008.

Dublin has seen numerous other success stories over the past year, including the groundbreaking for BMI Federal Credit Union's new 50,000-square-foot headquarters on Emerald Parkway.

Success in the area of future development is being assisted through a partnership between the

city and TechColumbus to provide early-stage funding and mentoring assistance to entrepreneurs with promising tech businesses.

Retail developments also have made headlines with the redevelopment of Bridge and High streets in the historic downtown area.

Plans for the project, being developed by the Stonehenge Co., call for a \$9 million, 22,000-square-foot mixed-use development at the northwest corner.

Infrastructure improvements to the area include a new 103-space city-owned parking lot, which was constructed on Darby Street to support area businesses and accommodate new growth in the area.

Just across the bridge along state Route 161, The Shoppes at River Ridge, developed by K2 Group, have opened. The upscale lifestyle retail center includes 103,000 square feet and will include Central Ohio's first Montgomery Inn restaurant.

Further east along state Route 161

will be the 115,000-square-foot Shamrock Crossing commercial site being developed by Stavroff Land & Development.

Dublin City Council approved the blueprint for continued growth in the city by adopting the 2007 Community Plan in December.

The document, developed over three years with valuable input from the community, is expected to guide decisions over the next 20 years.

In 2007, Dublin issued 611 permits, including 409 residential permits and 202 commercial permits, indicating a continuing healthy building climate.

The construction value of the permits was \$162.4 million, which includes \$101.6 million in commercial construction and \$60.8 million for residential construction.

Those residential projects include Tartan Ridge, located on Hyland-Croy Road and offering a mixed-use development of 270 homes with a small neighborhood retail component;

Sunrise Senior Living, a 66,000-square-foot assisted living facility on Shamrock Boulevard near state Route 161; and Senior Star Living on Post Road, which will add a 89,000-square-foot assisted-living facility to Dublin Retirement Village.

Other residential projects coming to Dublin are Oak Park, a mixed-use development at the southwest corner of Mitchell-Dewitt and Hyland-Croy roads, and Greystone Mews on Tuller Ridge Drive.

The former will incorporate conservation design and smart-growth principles and offer diverse housing as well as a shopping, working and recreation experience for residents, while the latter is a new residential development designed with traditional neighborhood development planning principals.

*Colleen Gilger is the economic development administrator for the city of Dublin.*

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# Business growth does not detract from Worthington's historic beauty

By ANNE BROWN  
For The Daily Reporter

Take a drive along High Street in historic Worthington and you can't miss all the activity and new development taking place. There are a number of big projects going in along the central corridor that will bring many new opportunities and amenities to Worthington businesses, visitors and residents.

Jason Liu, owner of Jason's Restaurant, has a reputation for fine cuisine in Central Ohio and his next restaurant will be located in Worthington.

Liu, a Worthington area resident, is constructing a restaurant and banquet center at 6880 N. High St. When completed, Jason's will feature restaurant seating for 250, as well as meeting rooms and banquet facilities on the second floor.

The restaurant is expected to open in May.

When a big chain pharmacy, CVS, bought the property occupied by a locally-owned grocery store, Jubilee, in the center of Worthington, some residents were apprehensive. They thought the change would detract from the in character of Worthington's historic downtown.

But advance planning years earlier laid the foundation for creating an attractive new two-story, multi-use development at the corner of High and North Streets that will offer unique retail and residential opportunities to the Worthington community.

The development is in the heart of Worthington's Architectural Review District and had to be created with those design standards in mind. In addition, the city's Comprehensive Plan outlines specific goals for redevelopment in that area and throughout Worthington.

The plan states that the city should strive to draw the feel of downtown's central business district farther north and that any future development should have the buildings pushed closer to the sidewalks, with parking in the back.

The plan also calls for more housing options in the downtown area, which would promote walkability and be an enhancement to the neighborhood, and it states that design should be compliant with the architectural district regulations and a good fit for the neighborhood.

City leaders worked closely with developers, Skilken D.S. LLC, to come up with a project that would be aesthetically pleasing and meet the needs of the community.

The end result is a complex of three buildings with a footprint of approximately 25,000 feet, which includes a CVS Pharmacy, room for other retail establishments and four apartments on the second floor.

CVS will have a drive-through pharmacy and parking behind the building, and the complex's architectural elements are a good fit for the historic flavor of downtown.

The development is under construction, with the building housing CVS scheduled for completion by June. Construction of the other two buildings will follow.

Also, extensive renovations have been taking place over the past several months at the Kroger Fresh Fare (a new Kroger prototype store) at Worthington Square and work is nearly complete.

Other businesses continue to join the Worthington landscape, as evidenced by the nearly 500 new jobs that came to the city in 2007.

RoadRunner Sports, Waterworks, IKON Office Solutions, Panasonic Factory Solutions, TransInternational, Nexus Technology and CF Bank are among those businesses.

City officials also continue to work closely with current and prospective businesses to assist with their expansion and development. The Worthington Venture Grant Program has provided financial incentives to qualifying companies and has been a valuable tool for attracting business to the city.

Anne Brown is a community relations/public information officer for the city of Worthington.

## SECTOR 3

# Northeastern Franklin County

Reynoldsburg • Easton • Northland • Westerville  
Gahanna • Bexley • New Albany

## Commercial development thrives in Reynoldsburg

By LUCAS HAIRE  
For The Daily Reporter

Commercial development continued at a rapid pace in the city of Reynoldsburg during 2007, in spite of a slow-down in residential growth.

A number of major commercial development projects came to the city last year, the largest being The Shoppes at East Broad, located at East Broad Street and Waggoner Road.

In January 2008, a Lowe's Home Improvement Center opened at the site, which will anchor more than 500,000 square feet of new retail and restaurant space. Joining Lowe's on outlots will be an Aldi Inc. grocery, a National City bank and a Burger King.

Commercial development also progressed on state Route 256 where a new 132,000- square-foot Target store is being constructed. It is scheduled to open in March 2009.

The Target site spans more than 20 acres and will include 30,000 square feet of space for additional retailers and two outlots for retail and office development.

Retailers and restaurants that have recently opened locations along the Route 256 corridor include Cord Camera, Olive Garden, Tim Horton's, Culver's, Fairfield National Bank and Noodles.

While the Target site was the last large retail site available in the Taylor Square area, many smaller restaurant and retail sites remain available.

In 2007, city planning staff was busy with the beginning of a process to establish commercial zoning overlays, as the current zoning ordinance

does not allow the type of development the community desires within a number of Reynoldsburg's commercial areas.

The zoning overlays will apply to specific areas of the city and will provide guidance for those who want to develop or redevelop sites, which should lead to a quicker development process that is both business-friendly and meets the goals of the community.

In addition, the overlays will help protect the city's investment of more than \$10 million in streetscape improvements to East Main Street.

Since the completion of that streetscape project in late 2006, there has been more than \$7 million in new commercial investment on East Main, including a 10,325-square-foot retail center recently developed by Metropolitan Partners.

The center currently is occupied by a Starbucks coffee shop, but includes space for up to five tenants. Other new businesses along East Main include a new 3,000-square-foot Columbus Metro Federal Credit Union, the redevelopment of a vacant building into a Cooper State Bank, and the construction of a Chase Bank and a new Kroger Fuel Center.

Redevelopment on East Main Street is likely to continue in 2008, with the city working on select sites.

Reynoldsburg continues to be an attractive and prosperous place for new businesses and residents alike, and city administration looks forward to assisting and welcoming them all to our community.

Lucas Haire is the planning administrator for the city of Reynoldsburg.



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# Easton an exciting destination, and there's still more in the pipeline

By MIKE DUFFY  
For The Daily Reporter

Officials at The Georgetown Co. and Steiner + Associates, co-developers of Easton Town Center, recently announced that Tiffany & Co., the internationally renowned jeweler, will open a store at Easton in November 2008.

Tiffany officials said Easton was the most attractive location in Central Ohio for retailers such as their company, and that there have been discussions about opening a store there for several years.

As part of the same construction project, luxury retailer Henri Bendel will also expand to create "A Bigger, Better Bendel" at the corner of New Bond St. and The Strand immediately adjacent to the future Tiffany & Co. store.

"Columbus (is) a metropolitan community worthy of the highest caliber and most selective retail," said Adam Flatto, president of The Georgetown Co. "This opens doors for other new retail to come to Central Ohio."

Since 1837, Tiffany & Co. has been a big name in the jewelry industry and Easton officials believe it has the power to bring other big names to the center.

The approximately 6,200-square-foot Easton Town Center store will feature diamond engagement rings, sterling silver jewelry, and collections by Elsa Peretti, Paloma Picasso, Jean Schlumberger and Frank Gehry, as well as watches, gifts and accessories.

Henri Bendel, New York's well-known original Fifth Avenue boutique, is a destination for fashion-conscious women. The Easton location, currently under renovation, is the only one in existence outside New York.

As part of its redevelopment, Henri Bendel closed shop in February in order to open again this fall with "A Bigger, Better Bendel," that will showcase the brand and focusing on accessories, home fragrance and personal care products.

While many people think of Easton as complete, it still has plenty of room to grow both inward and outward.

Easton's developers have more than 300 acres nearby in which to expand, and has also taken steps to redevelop the existing town center.

In some cases, Easton has demolished and rebuilt portions of buildings, changed roads, turned parking lots into office buildings and converted surface lots into parking garages. Visitors might be surprised how much it has changed in just the past 12 months alone.

Over the past year, Easton has added the following tenants: Coldwater Creek, Fahlgren Inc., Lacoste, Lynd's Gourmet, Puma, Swarovski, VSX, west elm and WomanKind.

Also, a four-story brick office building called "4030 Easton Station" is nearly complete, and signage is up for some of the tenants that will occupy this location in the heart of Easton near P.F. Chang's and Potbelly Sandwich Works.

Right now, construction crews are wrapping up the store design for west elm, which will be located on the first floor, and also the interior space for Fahlgren Inc., an upper floor tenant. WomanKind is another upper floor tenant with a focus on gynecological, obstetrical and other health services for women.

*Mike Duffy is the spokesman for Easton Town Center.*

# Northland gaining new businesses, jobs due to public-private partnership

By MELANIE MCINTYRE  
Daily Reporter Staff Writer

The \$80 million Northland Village development will help breathe new life into Columbus' northeast corridor for years to come, according to officials associated with the project.

"I am pleased with the progress that has been made at Northland Village. The empty shell of the former mall could have been left a vacant and blighted wasteland but, together, we stepped up to take action through public and private investment to help restore the vibrancy of the Morse Road corridor," Mayor Michael Coleman said in March.

Last year, Columbus Urban Growth Corp. — a private non-profit real estate developer formed by Coleman in 1996 to restore Columbus' urban core — and The Stonehenge Co. announced they would be partnering to redevelop the former Northland Mall site, with 57 acres reserved for Northland Village.

Upon completion, the village will feature more than 550,000 square feet of mixed-use space and generate more than 800 onsite jobs.

Already, the Ohio Department of Taxation's operations on the site's western side have added more than 1,000 jobs.

The village's eastern anchor, Wisconsin-based home improvement store Menards, will occupy 160,000 square feet.

"With this incredible retailer, Northland Village is well on its way to attracting the kind of future tenants that will make it a huge success and civic center," said Mo Dioun, president of The Stonehenge Co., which is based in Gahanna.

Menards is expected to break ground in 2008 and open in Spring 2009.

The village's first phase of development will be centered on Menards and gateway tenants along Morse Road, while the second phase will focus on the

southern central portion of the site, including conversion of the former JC Penny building into an office space with natural light and new architecture.

A pedestrian-friendly "centerpiece" with water features, sidewalks, pavers and park areas will be included in the third phase of development.

"Our goal is to provide Northland with a community gathering place," said Mark Froehlich, president of Urban Growth.

"When I was growing up, the mall was the center of the Northland community; now, the center of the community will be Northland Village," he added.

Once the village is complete, the city of Columbus will have invested more than \$38 million into the mall's redevelopment, including \$19.4 million on land acquisition, utility improvements, and new roads and \$18 million worth of improvements along Morse from I-71 to Cleveland Avenue.

Northland Mall opened in 1964 and served as a "catalyst for the city's northeastern expansion," Froehlich said.

For decades, it was a popular shopping destination, but the introduction of other area malls, including City Center and The Mall at Tuttle Crossing, led to its demise in the 1990s and early 2000s.

After a 38-year run, Northland closed its doors; it was demolished in January 2004.

Despite the mall's absence, the Northland area has continued to experience population growth.

According to the 2000 Census, Northland is home to 96,000 people, but it has been estimated that its population now exceeds 100,000, said Dave Paul, president of the Northland Community Council.

Were Northland a city, it would be the seventh largest in Ohio, he said.

In addition to progress at the Northland Village site, the Taco Bell at 3834 Morse Road recently renovated its facade and Telhio Credit Union opened a branch at 1681 Morse Road in May 2007.



# Good access, good sites and good relations lead to strong growth in Westerville

By SCOTT MCAFEE  
For The Daily Reporter

The city of Westerville continues to be a business expansion and relocation destination, and for good reason: The combination of accessibility, premium infrastructure, city and educational services, recreational opportunities, residential choices, cost of living and quality of life, make it one of the most attractive communities in the Midwest.

In 2007, Money magazine took notice of Westerville by naming it one of America's best places to live. The city placed 46th, making it the highest-ranked Ohio community on the list.

Money editors were particularly impressed with Westerville's affordability, safety and wealth of recreation choices. Coincidentally, Westerville's Parks & Recreation Department was named the best department of its size in the United States in late 2007.

"All of these components are important to our success in attracting and retaining our business partners," said Westerville Economic Development Coordinator Julie Colley.

"Businesses want to keep their workforce happy. Westerville provides them easy access, unlimited dining and retail opportunities, and lots of recreational opportunities, including our Westerville Community Center and its programs, in a safe and affordable setting," she added.

Westerville is continuing its success by attracting various health-care providers to the area. It is home to Mount Carmel St. Ann's Hospital's main campus, which was the first planned suburban hospital in Central Ohio.

The original campus continues to grow with new medical services and medical offices, and Mount Carmel's urgent care center is one mile north, in the Westar Center of Business.

Other medical offices in Westar include The Center for Surgical Dermatology and Westerville's own Children's Hospital, which recently expanded to include a children's sports rehab facility — one of just a handful in the entire United States.

Just a few blocks to the east, on the northwest corner of County Line and Africa roads, ground will be broken on the 60-bed Westerville Psychiatric Hospital.

This is a big year for Ohio Health in Westerville, which will be opening a 200,000-square-foot facility at the northeast corner of Polaris Parkway and Africa Road. The medical office building is expected to open in early summer while the urgent care, ambulatory service center and other surgical facilities will open in late fall.

Westerville hit a redevelopment home run in its

Eastwind area with the new Central Ohio Neurological Physicians site just north of Interstate 270.

The \$5 million redevelopment investment will serve as a benchmark project for Westerville's mature southern corridor for years to come.

Also in redevelopment efforts, much occurred along Westerville's State Street corridor with the addition of Guernsey Bank, Papa Murphy's Pizza and a new NAPA facility.

FastSigns, a Westerville staple that had outgrown its existing space, decided to build a new facility close by in the Brookside Office Park. In addition, a recently-closed athletic club became the new home for Oakstone Academy, providing educational opportunities for children with autism.

In Westerville's historic Uptown District, the lineup of new businesses includes the upscale Uptown Market, Martini's Restaurant, Outside Envy, It's All in the Name, Java Central, Uptown Cigar Co. and Lola Belle.

Pasquale's, a popular Italian eatery for decades, is expanding at its current uptown location to better serve its clientele. Developers continue their investment in Westerville's Westar Center of Business.

Daimler's 440 Building along Polaris Parkway is nearly occupied with clients that include Quick Solutions, Huntington National Bank, Vertex Systems, DL Ryan and Cigna.

Plans for a fourth building on that campus are under consideration. Additionally, the development is home to Westerville's first Cameron Mitchell restaurant, The Rusty Bucket.

Altair continues to develop, with DBS' recently completed Altair Professional Village providing opportunities, along with Opus North's Altair I, for potential office users desiring a very unique and pleasant work environment.

Nearby, Liebert Global Services, an Emerson subsidiary, is expanding its current campus to include a 70,000-square-foot North American training center that will be constructed to meet LEED Silver standards, becoming Westerville's first "green" building.

Farther west along County Line Road, the Andrew Corp. recently occupied its new building, a mirror image of the 45,000-square-foot building occupied by Nationwide Mutual Insurance.

The continued buzz about Westerville is for good reason. Good access, good sites and good relations lead to consistently strong growth.

*Scott McAfee is the community affairs coordinator for the city of Westerville.*

# Gahanna's downtown expected to attract lots of visitors

By JARED POWELL  
For The Daily Reporter

Inclusion in Money magazine's "2007 Best Places to Live" confirmed what Gahanna residents and business owners have known for years: Gahanna is a community rich in entrepreneurial spirit and civic pride.

While the recognition is not surprising to residents, it remains a welcome acknowledgement of the city's commitment to making Gahanna truly a desirable place to live, work and play. The accolade also represents an opportunity for people to be reintroduced to a city that has matured from a bedroom community into an economic and cultural trendsetter.

Many more accolades are expected to follow as the city's signature projects — Creekside Gahanna and Central Park of Gahanna — are fully realized.

Already, Creekside, in its soft opening, has become the "new heart for Gahanna." A decade in the making, Creekside creates a central downtown district along the picturesque banks of the Big Walnut Creek.

In the footprint of a never-matured downtown now stands a thriving entertainment, residential and business hub offering year-round alfresco dining, luxury condominiums and premiere office space.

Twelve new businesses, including Mezzo Italian Kitchen and Wine and Buck Mulligans Irish Pub, have opened their doors to glowing reviews.

The waterfront development also will provide the annual summer Creekside Blues and Jazz Festival and the Holiday Lights! Parade and Festival with a brand new look.

The summer music festival brings locally- and nationally-recognized blues and jazz musicians to downtown Gahanna for three days of free music; Holiday Lights! is one of the largest lighted holiday parades in Ohio and officially kicks off the winter holiday season.

The Creekside Blues and Jazz Festival will take center stage from June 20 to 22, and Holiday Lights! will brighten the streets on Nov. 29.

Marina upgrade plans also are well underway in Creekside.

Recently-approved funds will allow paddle boats to return to Mill Race and help with future marina developments such as bank enforcement, new landscaping and pedestrian walkways. Paddleboats

will operate from spring through the rest of the year.

Meanwhile, Central Park of Gahanna is at the forefront of Ohio's office, commerce and technology parks.

Demonstrating the city's commitment to environmental responsibility, Central Park is located on the former Bedford I Landfill which sat semi-closed for 25 years.

Now completely remediated, the more than 2,000-acre campus will offer 1.2 million square feet of build-to-suit corporate campuses, office condominiums and retail.

The Central Park Golf Academy, now under construction in the center of the development, will be complete with a driving range, indoor training facility and a 27-acre nine-hole golf course.

A complement of walking trails and open space with panoramic views of the downtown Columbus skyline will ring the business park. Outdoor enthusiasts also can take advantage of an extended network of trails connecting Central Park with the Gahanna Woods State Nature Preserves.

In 2008, Gahanna will be the host site for the Building Industry Association of Central Ohio Parade of Homes — an annual showcase of homebuilders in the area. For the event, the BIA has tapped Manor Homes to develop up to 18 lots next year at Village of Hannah Farms.

Other participating homebuilders include: Fischer Homes, Key Homes, M/I Homes Inc., New England Homes, OS Homes, Trinity Homebuilders and Tuckerman Home Group Inc.

The site is located off Clark State and Reynoldsburg New Albany Road, and will provide 60 building lots situated on 40 acres recently annexed to Gahanna.

The Village of Hannah Farms is billed as a destination community complete with a landscaped entrance, spacious lot sizes and roughly 14 acres of wooded reserves, wetlands and open space.

Hannah Farms Park, an adjoining 27-acre recreation space, will include walking trails, meeting space, a fishing pond, playground, courts and play fields.

The \$2.5 million newly-designed park is part of the TIF that was employed to support infrastructure for the area.

*Jared Powell is an intern in the city of Gahanna's development department.*



Gahanna



# Revitalization efforts bring multiple condos, new retail ventures to Bexley

By BRUCE LANGNER  
For The Daily Reporter

Bexley's revitalized Main Street continues to prosper after three years of redevelopment and new construction. Since 2005, 12 projects have been undertaken there and private investment is approaching \$40 million.

The largest project, Gateway North, is a \$26 million mixed-use project that was started in 2005 and completed in 2007. The redevelopment at Parkview and Main Streets features 34 condominiums, three four-story brownstones, as well as retail and office uses.

Two retail tenants occupied the complex in 2007: Rusty Bucket Restaurant and Mozart's Piano Café.

A third retail tenant, Jeni's Ice Cream, is scheduled to move in this spring, and two additional entities have announced plans to occupy second-floor space there.

Condominium prices range from the upper \$300,000s to \$1.4 million, while the brownstones range from \$995,500 to \$1.12 million.

A five-story condominium redevelopment project was constructed at the corner of Dawson and Main Streets, appropriately named One Dawson.

The project features seven condominium units ranging in price from \$800,000 to \$1.9 million.

The \$3.9 million project opened in 2006 and units are still being sold. A small 850-square-foot retail area also is available on the first floor fronting Main Street.

Shoppes of Bexley, completed in 2007, is a retail/office mixed-use project constructed at a cost of \$2.5 million.

The first floor includes Connell's Maple Leaf Florists and Aladdin's Eatery, while the second floor contains the offices of Barnett Realty, Robins Financial Group, and the National Land Advisory Group. One retail space remains available on the first floor.

Chase Bank, another mixed-use project, was constructed at the corner of Roosevelt and Main at a cost of \$2.7 million. Chase occupies half the 7,200-square-foot building, while the remaining 3,600 square feet are still available.

In 2007, Huntington Bank acquired the SkyBank building at Vernon and Main and moved its offices from another Main Street location.

Sky renovated the existing building in 2006 at a cost of \$250,000 and the former Huntington Bank site is now available for redevelopment.

The largest new construction project in 2007 was the new CVS building at the corner of Cassingham and Main.

CVS spent \$1.4 million on the project, moving from an adjacent location and bringing the building out to the right-of-way in conformance with Bexley Main Street Guidelines.

The building occupies 15,743 square feet and was constructed by Skilken.

To make way for the new CVS, Pizza Plus moved to a new location at Roosevelt and Main, renovating a former restaurant at a cost of \$250,000.

Completed in Spring 2007, Flavors Eatery occupies a former dry cleaners at the corner of Euclidean and Main — a 1,346-square-foot space that cost \$70,000 to renovate. The restaurant also includes an outdoor patio area in the rear of the building.

Meanwhile, Penn Station East Coast Subs moved into the former Woodworker's Building at Cassingham and Main, renovating 1,756 square feet.

The final project to break ground in 2007 was the new Main Street Synagogue, adjacent to the Bexley Library and on the former site of Connell's Florists.

The \$3.5 million project will include a large social hall for community events, such as wedding receptions.

Bexley now boasts 15 restaurants or

coffee shops with outdoor seating areas, fulfilling a goal of the Main Street Redevelopment Commission formed in 1998 to revitalize Main Street and make it a more pedestrian-friendly environment.

The guidelines developed by that group require all new buildings to be brought forward to the sidewalk with parking in the rear. However, new buildings with restaurants can reserve some outdoor eating space between the building and the sidewalk.

Early in 2008, developer CRV-XVI Main Cassingham Ltd. began renovating the facade of a small commercial strip center located on the south side of Main Street across from the new CVS.

The \$150,000 project will be the first recipient of the city's Commercial Rehabilitation Grant Program, which

assists owners of existing commercial buildings on Main Street.

The city will be promoting the grant program to encourage additional renovations along that thoroughfare this year.

Bexley also offers several financial incentives to developers who bring in retail and office users. For instance, all mixed-use developments with at least two uses (retail, office, or residential) are eligible for Community Reinvestment Area tax abatements for their projects.

Already, four such projects have received tax abatements.

Further, the city has an Office Grant program for any new or existing offices adding 10 or more employees to their workforce.

Last year, Bexley also adopted a Community Reinvestment Area for North Cassady Avenue on the city's far

north side. The CRA applies to a small commercial area to encourage redevelopment in that part of the city.

Bexley also has also established a Tax Increment Financing District for a one-mile stretch of Main Street. TIF funds will be used to reimburse public infrastructure costs for two Main Street projects and fund streetscape improvements to the entire length of Main Street.

Redevelopment opportunities on Bexley's Main Street and other commercial areas throughout the city continue to be available. Plus, retail and office spaces are still obtainable on Main Street, Cassady Avenue, and Drexel Avenue.

*Bruce Langner is the planning and economic development director for the city of Bexley.*



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# Big businesses see benefits of locating, expanding in New Albany

By EILEEN LEUBY  
For The Daily Reporter

Two major corporate expansions and the relocation of an international company have elevated employment options in New Albany and continue to demonstrate how hot the market is here.

"New Albany prioritizes job growth as the essential ingredient to uphold a vibrant local economy," said Jennifer Chrysler, community development director for the village of New Albany.

Tween Brands moved its Justice headquarters into an adjacent 60,000-square-foot facility in November 2007 and fashion giant Abercrombie & Fitch recently finished a considerable expansion at its corporate campus, adding three buildings (measuring 75,800-, 100,000-, and 991,551- square feet each) and 450 new jobs.

Meanwhile, Commercial Vehicle Group moved from its 25,000-square-foot leased facility on West Campus Oval into a new 91,000-square-foot corporate office and research and development facility in January 2008.

Site selectors keep New Albany on their radar due to the availability of large parcels of land and new speculative sites that allow occupants a swift relocation process.

On-site parking, a large dedicated labor pool spanning contiguous communities, and amenities such as the \$1.3 million fiber optic network in which the village has invested also make New Albany a popular spot for business growth.

"We continue to attract sustaining businesses that value superb schools, outstanding housing selections,

and effective transportation systems," said Bill Ebbing, president of New Albany Co., which along with The Daimler Group, Georgetown Co., and

Capital Square Ltd., and New Albany Co., has begun building a 250,000 square foot speculative office complex called the Water's Edge.

Speculative retail spaces have been filling rapidly to serve the growing residential and employment centers with convenient parking.

Among the options is a lease-to-own two-story series of attractive commercial spaces in the Village Center with the possibility of second floor residential space called the New Albany Exchange.

Meanwhile, a second phase expansion of the Market Square is underway in the Village Center and a host of specialized medical practices continue to set up shop close to the Mount Carmel New Albany Surgical Hospital, which specializes in musculoskeletal and neurological disease.

Location also is among New Albany's best features. Situated in Franklin County just 20 miles northeast of the state capital, a typical commute to downtown Columbus takes only 25 minutes.

New Albany is only seven miles from Port Columbus International Airport and approximately 20 minutes to Rickenbacker Air Freight Port which, combined, boast more than 40 air freight carriers.

Truck traffic has direct access to major distribution hubs for local corporate retailers at the area's east end of the New Albany Business Campus, and the New Albany Expressway connects to the 270 highway system. It is positioning for another expansion of the east connection to Newark.

A new roundabout and eventual extension of the bike path to Gahanna is part of the village's long-term plan to link nearby communities via bike trails.

*Eileen Leuby is president of the New Albany Area Chamber of Commerce. Jennifer Chrysler, community development director for the village of New Albany, contributed to the article.*



# Southern Franklin County

Groveport • Canal Winchester • Pickerington • Grove City

## Developers demonstrate confidence in Groveport as a world-class market

By JEFF GREEN  
For The Daily Reporter

Although development activity in the Central Ohio region was somewhat slower during 2007 than it has been in recent years, there was good news to be found throughout the village of Groveport.

Developers continued to demonstrate confidence in the village as a world-class market in which to do business.

Opus North Corp. completed the first phase of expansion at the Opus Business Center at Rickenbacker with the completion of Rickenbacker 7, a 496,000-square-foot speculative building located on Toy Road.

In addition, Duke Realty Corp. and the Columbus Regional Airport Authority completed tenant improvements to their 624,000-square-foot building on Rohr Road for Whirlpool Corp., resulting in the creation of more than 60 new jobs.

Duke Realty also received necessary zoning approvals and began construction on its next project, a 936,000-square-foot building located off Spiegel Drive between Alum Creek Drive and Port Road.

Continuing their expansion of the Rickenbacker Global Logistics Park, Duke Realty and the Columbus Regional Airport Authority completed the acquisition and rezoning of 68 acres on Rohr Road near the intersection of Rohr and state Route 317.

The developer anticipates the addition of more than one million square feet of warehouse/distribution space in two buildings.

With the imminent opening of the Norfolk-Southern Intermodal Facility near Rickenbacker Airport, providing another strategic logistical advantage for the Rickenbacker area, developers and local real estate experts are looking forward to continued surges in the demand for warehouse and distribution space.

A request for rezoning submitted by the Franklin County Engineer's Office was approved in 2007, paving the way for a complete redevelopment and modernization of the engineer's outpost on Hendron Road. The project will involve the construction of a new salt barn, new fueling facilities and additional garage and office space.

Small business expansion in the village continued, as well.

Two particularly notable expansions took place at the Groveport Animal Clinic, which completed a 2,500-square-foot addition to its facility, and Burbacher Photography, immediately east of the Animal Hospital on Main Street, which added 2,700 square feet to its studio.

In 2007, the village entered into a lease agreement with the Pizzuti Cos. for property located at the corner of Front and Main streets. Construction of a mixed-use retail and office center is proposed for the site.

Continental Real Estate Cos. is working with Pizzuti to market the project with the hope of securing at least one restaurant tenant to meet local demand for more eating establishments.

*Jeff Green is the development director for the village of Groveport.*





# New health-care campus, retail development expected to draw more businesses to Canal Winchester

By CARRIE HOOVER  
For The Daily Reporter

Only 10 years ago, if you were driving through Canal Winchester along U.S. Route 33 you wouldn't have seen much more than fields and farmland. Fast forward to 2008 and you might be in for a surprise as you'll now see an assortment of commercial development from dining establishments to big-box retailers.

A majority of the development taking place today is around the new U.S. Route 33 and Diley Road interchange and the Canal Pointe Commerce Center off Diley Road, just north of the interchange.

The most notable projects underway include formal plans for a 55-acre health care campus and the development of a 210,000-square-foot Meijer store with gas station.

Meijer will be an anchor store for the new retail parcel, but the land also includes 13 outparcels for future retail tenants.

"Not only will the new Meijer store boost our tax base and bring additional jobs to the area, we also anticipate that its opening will fuel additional development in the area as other

retailers typically locate near Meijer stores," said Chris Strayer, development director for the village of Canal Winchester.

"Although we don't have firm commitments from any tenants at this time, we have been in discussion with several prospects and expect retailers to begin coming forward after the Meijer store opens in May," he added.

Mount Carmel Health System and Fairfield Medical Center are partnering to construct a health care campus on the northwest corner of Diley Road, across the street from the new Meijer store.

The campus will be constructed in three phases, with construction on the first phase expected to begin this year. Construction on Phase II is anticipated to begin in 2011 and Phase III will be developed as demand dictates.

Phase I will include 70,000 square feet of medical and office space, and will consist of a 24-hour emergency service center with diagnostic and lab space, as well as medical offices.

Lab space, MRI and CAT scan facilities, outpatient services and medical offices totaling 70,000 square feet will round out Phase II. Plans for Phase III include a 90-bed hospital tower that

can be expanded to a 150-bed facility if needed.

"One recent focus of the village has been public infrastructure development to help support private investments such as the hospital," Strayer said.

The village spent \$12 million on public infrastructure, such as the Diley Road reconstruction in 2007 that included the improvement of a two-lane road to a five-lane road with medians, turn lanes and traffic signals.

Another major improvement made to Canal Winchester's public services in 2007 was a \$5.4 million upgrade to its water treatment facility.

The new system is able to accommodate up to 2 million gallons of water per day, while the old facility was only equipped to handle 750,000 gallons per day.

Completing the development along the Diley Road corridor is the Canal Pointe Industrial Park.

In 2007, AK Athletic, Bus Service Inc. and Aero Sport all located in this business park. Tobin Merritt & Associates also began construction on a 10,000-square-foot facility in Canal

Pointe that will be completed this year.

Phases I and II of Canal Pointe Industrial Park are completely occupied and Phase III is 50 percent full.

Construction on Phase IV is now underway with infrastructure expected to be finished this summer. When complete, Phase IV will include approximately 50 acres and Foreign-Trade Zone designation.

Other projects slated for 2008 include the Shoppes at Winchester Farms and Winchester Circle.

Phase I of Winchester Farms is approved for spring construction, and will include 20,000 square feet of mixed use retail and office space.

Meanwhile, Winchester Circle is in the preliminary planning and engineering stage, with construction proposed for this fall. When complete, this development is expected to be a regional power center with 350,000 square feet of primarily retail space with some office space.

Strayer said that although the economy has leveled-off, Canal Winchester continues to experience

both commercial and industrial growth.

"Projects that are complete, under construction, or in the approval process for '07 and '08 equate to approximately \$50 million worth of private investment," he said.

Similar to most communities, the residential boom Canal Winchester has experienced in recent years has begun to taper off. However, the village still continues to see steady growth and remains on track to reach city-status after the 2010 census.

Looking forward another 10 years, the village's landscape again might look very different than it does today.

Canal Winchester offers developers a prime location with direct access along the high-growth Route 33 Corridor, strong business incentives and ample land for development— all key factors that continue to entice new companies to call Canal Winchester home.

*Carrie Hoover is the community affairs director for the village of Canal Winchester.*

Canal Winchester



# Pickerington's goal is to balance number of rooftops with offices

By MELANIE MCINTYRE  
Daily Reporter Staff Writer

In the last few years, Pickerington has experienced significant residential growth. Now, the city's primary concern is making sure its commercial development and infrastructure can keep up.

Pickerington City Council adopted a housing moratorium in 2003 in an attempt to keep new construction at manageable levels. Prior to that, homes were being built at a rate of about 500 to 600 per year.

"We had about a hundred houses built last year," said Tim Hansley, the city's development director.

And although that might be a welcome change, overall development in 2007 was "slower than expected, but not dead," he said, adding that the quality of Pickerington's public schools has helped make the community very attractive to families.

Hansley said he is optimistic about the future, predicting that 2008 development activity in Pickerington will be better than it was last year.

Several large projects are already in the pipeline, including a \$35 million emergency medical complex on 55 acres off Diley Road.

Ground will break on the facility, a joint venture between Mount Carmel Health Systems and Fairfield Medical Center, this summer.

Additionally, Diley Road itself is being altered, going from a two-lane byway to a five-lane connector between state Route 256 and U.S. 33 — a move the city hopes will promote office and retail growth along its northern and southern portions.

The road widening began in February and is slated for completion in 2009.

Pickerington also is in the process of expanding its water treatment plant

and during First Quarter 2008, the city bought The Swim Club, a privately-owned outdoor aquatic facility.

The \$653,000 purchase will allow Pickerington to expand its recreational offerings, Hansley said.

The 3.9-acre property, which features an 8,650-square-foot heated pool, wading pool, bath house and concession stand, was purchased with parks and recreation impact fees. Revenue from membership fees and concessions will cover operating costs.

Other recreation projects coming to the area include a 54,000-square-foot Urban Active Fitness Center (which will go up on Hill Road in place of a former Big Bear store) and two bowling alleys, which are in the approval process, he said.

Ground already has broken on a 20,000-square-foot retail center that will occupy land at the southeast corner of state Route 256 and Crossroads Boulevard.

The site, once home to an Exxon gas station and two car washes, presented environmental concerns, but those are close to being resolved, Hansley said.

In March, work began on a 17.7-acre mixed-use project along Hill Road that will feature nearly 100,000 square feet of new and renovated office and retail space.

A city incentive will allow property tax increases resulting from improvements to the parcel to be put toward road improvements necessitated by the project.

Further, an annexation agreement being negotiated between Pickerington and Violet Township would foster construction of a small office park on the city's west side, Hansley said.

Ultimately, the city would like to "balance out rooftops with offices, so people can live and work in Pickerington," he said.

# Foresight, vision catapult Grove City ahead in the redevelopment game

By TRISH FODOR  
For The Daily Reporter

Capitalizing on a well-laid economic development foundation is Grove City's goal for 2008. This shining star of southwestern Franklin County has shown steady growth and shows no signs of slowing down.

In 2007, Grove City fostered a plethora of projects, including the residential development of single-family homes and condominiums east of Interstate 71 at Meadow Groves Estates and The Pinnacle Golf Club.

Designed by PGA veteran Lanny Watkins, Pinnacle is an aesthetic wonder with natural woodlands, breathtaking views and cascading waterfalls throughout the course, reminiscent of the lush southern links in Virginia and the Carolinas.

Surrounding the country club is an exclusive residential community that served as the site of the 2007 BIA Parade of Homes.

Highlighting the numerous commercial and office projects in various stages of construction is a 53,000-square-foot office complex consisting of seven buildings on Marlane Drive. The site will house the home office of The Ohio Board of Cosmetology.

Several retail projects are also underway including: a 207,000-square-foot Meijer Superstore and Convenience/Gas Station on London Groveport Road, a 20,000-square-foot Circuit City located east of Buckeye Parkway and a 30,000-square-foot HH Gregg store on the north side of Buckeye Place.

Some of the key projects submitted for review for 2008 are a 21,000-square-foot expansion of the Kroger store on Stringtown and Hoover roads, a 212,000-square-foot distribution center for KC Life and a 15,000-square-foot Gordon Food Services facility, also located on Stringtown Road.

Perhaps most distinguishing and ambitious of all of the projects is the continuing redevelopment of Grove City's Town Center.

Part of the city's local economic development plan involved transforming the land surrounding city hall, including an old lumberyard site, into a community focal point. The proactive plan integrates historic landmarks with dining, entertainment and retail venues.

Lincoln Street Studio, which is creating the economic plan and developer The Stonehedge Co., (known for its work on Gahanna's Creekside and in Old Dublin) are jointly driving the Town Center project.

According to Frank Elmer, principal of Lincoln Street Studios, Grove City already has a solid foundation to build on, which is beneficial, given current economic conditions.

"Grove City Town Center has the skeleton and some meat on the bones already," said Elmer. "That makes what we're planning both reasonable and achievable."

Lincoln Street's eight-month comprehensive study will provide recommendations on ways to enhance redevelopment with mixed-used options. This allows the group to leverage existing development in the area by combining retail, office and housing with park space, sidewalks and bike paths creating a quaint and desirable destination for residents and visitors to enjoy.

The plan's emphasis on mixed-use not only takes full advantage of pre-existing development in the area, but it makes Grove City's Town Center an economic stimulus as well.

Chris Boring, a market research expert and owner of Boulevard Strategies, is working on the marketing portion of the comprehensive study. He concurs with Elmer that the mixed-use model should be very effective in Grove City.

"Retail alone is not a catalyst for economic growth," said Boring. "You have to have identified markets and, in this case, the combination of housing, office and retail works."

Boring also cited the importance of public/private partnerships being a vital component in a successful redevelopment project. Without it, many best laid plans never make it to fruition.

However, where Grove City's Town Center project is concerned, planners and city officials are optimistic.

Many central Ohio communities have designated town squares or village greens and others are incorporating them into their redevelopment plans. Grove City officials hope that their unique Town Center plan will help distinguish them from everyone else. That is why the project is such a high priority in 2008. It is an initiative that unites the city, invested partners and residents as Grove City looks ahead to the future.

Trish Fodor is a freelance writer for the city of Grove City.



Grove City



# Local Businesses' Top 5 Current Development Projects



See ad, Page 2

## Top 5 Current Development Projects

Project	Electrical Contractors	Cost
Dublin Methodist Hospital	Mid-City Electric Co.	\$15 million
Grange Insurance Headquarters Expansion	Dynaletric Company of Ohio	\$11 million
Time Warner Data Center	Royal Electric Construction Corp.	\$4.5 million
AEP Operation Center	Knight Electric, Inc.	\$4.2 million
New Albany Performing Arts Center	The Superior Group	\$3 million

## Top 5 Current Development Projects



See ad, Back Cover

Project	Address	Cost
The Greene, Phase II	Beavercreek, OH	\$38 million
St. Leonard	Centerville, OH	\$25 million
Jeanne B. McCoy Community Center for the Arts	New Albany	\$14.1 million
Altercare of Canal Winchester & Hilliard	Canal Winchester, Hilliard	\$12 million
Springfield High School	Springfield, OH	\$10.2 million

## Top 5 Current Development Projects



See ad, Page 47

Project	Address	Cost
Shoppes at Wyandotte	5090-5212 E. Main St., Whitehall	\$3 million
Kroger Marketplace	7625 Sawmill Road, Dublin	\$23 million
Shoppes at Gateway	2152-2158 E. Main St., Bexley	\$4 million
Shoppes at Collingwood	3606 E. Main St., Whitehall	\$6 million
Shoppes at Airpointe	5200-5220 Cassady Ave., Columbus	\$3 million

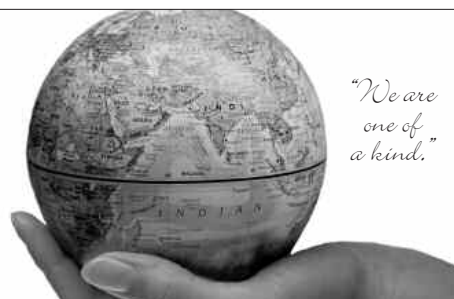
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## Powell's guide to growth brings many new businesses downtown

By DAVID BETZ  
For The Daily Reporter

The Downtown Revitalization Study completed in 2004 has jump-started new development within downtown Powell and, with that, a growing anticipation of creating the hub of activity that most communities want to see in their central business districts.

By having a plan to guide new development and examining policies that help to generate new business opportunities and physical improvements, the city is beginning to see the fruits of its efforts.

The largest new development within the downtown is 50 South Liberty.

The 40,000-square-foot mixed retail and office development is home to Liberty Tavern, Beehive Bread Co., and A Tangled Tale in the downstairs retail portion and Artina Promotional Products in the upstairs offices.

Being developed by Zenios Michael Zenios of 3-Pillar Homes, 50 South Liberty features turn-of-the-century vernacular architecture, brought out to the street in typical downtown fashion, with plenty of parking located behind the structure.

Already securing more than 50 new jobs within Powell, the development has the potential for tripling that amount. Additional retail and office space is available.

Right at the 4-Corners, Stavroff Development Co. is preparing to begin a new 5,000-square-foot retail building. No users have been identified as of press time.

Another new pulse at the heart of downtown Powell is a building designed in Italianate fashion — making it a very appropriate addition to the “Folk Victorian” architecture of the downtown.

The city also worked with the developer on an off-site parking agreement, as well as right-of-way acquisition for the future addition of left-turn lanes at this important intersection.

All of downtown Powell has been placed within a Tax Increment Finance District, approved by Powell voters, which should be able to handle many long-term capital improvement projects that are needed to help with current problems and handle projected growth in the area.

A future retail project is the Traditions of Powell Retail Center, which will be located at West Olentangy Street and Traditions Way, and will resemble an old stone farmhouse and barn, yet provide great restaurant and retail spaces.

Construction is slated to begin Spring 2008.

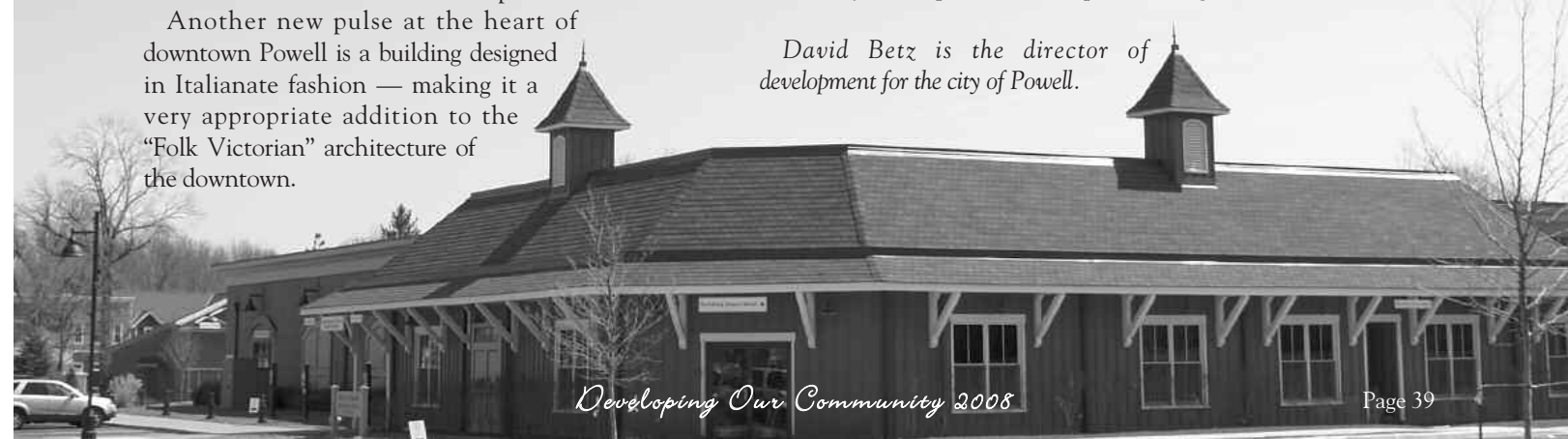
In order to help manage the ongoing change within the downtown business district, a Main Street-based business organization, Historic Downtown Powell Inc., has been formed and an executive director has been hired to coordinate the many volunteer committees promoting, enhancing and encouraging the economic improvement and coordinated design of downtown Powell.

But that is just the beginning.

The city also is taking another look at the Downtown Revitalization Study and part of that analysis will determine what types of businesses the community would like to see in the area so they can be recruited to Powell. The analysis is expected to take place throughout 2008.

David Betz is the director of development for the city of Powell.

Powell





# Delaware expecting big boom in commercial development for 2008

By MELANIE MCINTYRE  
Daily Reporter Staff Writer

Development in Delaware continues to thrive as the number of commercial projects in the pipeline reaches record highs.

Commercial permits issued by the city in 2007 topped the record set in 2006, with 197 permits awarded last year.

However, David Efland, Delaware's planning and community development director, said 2008 might be the first year the city issues more commercial permits than residential ones — an unsurprising statement considering the immense development underway on the south side of US 36/SR 37, just east of state Route 521.

Glenwood Commons, with more than 560,000 square feet of retail space, will be the "single biggest commercial project in the city's history when it's completed," Efland said.

Developed by Lakewood, Ohio-based Zaremba Group, the project will be anchored by Meijer, Home Depot and Kohl's.

Phase one is slated to open in time for the 2008 Holiday Season.

In 2007, Grady Memorial Hospital and Ohio Health completed the master plan for the 105 acres that will be home to Delaware Health Village, located at Glenn Road and Ohio Health Boulevard.

Ground broke on phase 1 of the project — Delaware Health Center — in November 2007.

The 60,000-square-foot facility is expected to include medical imaging, lab, and urgent care services, along with a sleep disorders center. Medical office space will account for 45,000 square feet.

Another important commercial project that began last year was a 62,500-square-foot expansion at Associated Hygienic Products' manufacturing facility, Efland said.

As a result of the expansion, 20 jobs will be added to the company's 250 existing positions.

Further, Powell Structural Systems announced plans for a 38,920-square-foot office, production and storage facilities expansion.

The project, at 130 Johnson Dr., will consist of two phases, the first of which began in Fall 2007. Work on phase two is scheduled for next summer.

Though a variety of commercial projects were launched in 2007, the number of housing starts in Delaware leveled off.

After a precipitous drop in 2006, the city issued just over 200 new housing permits last year, Efland said.

And the department has no reason to believe that housing starts will fall or rise considerably in 2008, he said.

A variety of homes are planned for the mixed-use development south of Glenwood Commons.

Dubbed "Hanover Corners," the 337-unit project will feature traditional detached homes and attached townhouses surrounding several green spaces and ponds.

Construction is expected to begin this summer.

Taking advantage of natural surroundings while incorporating sustainable stormwater management practices, Zaremba will develop a 23-acre wetland park to be dedicated to the city of Delaware.

The park, which has more than 10,000 plant species, will include a mile-long walking trail, pedestrian bridges and lookouts.

Another significant project last year, from the city's perspective, was the installation of roundabouts at Sycamore Lane and Cheshire Road, he said.

Roundabouts not only foster a continuous traffic flow, they also reduce side impact crashes and driver-pedestrian conflict points.

Other infrastructure improvements recently completed by the city include the installation of Glenn Road from the northern edge of the Estates at Braumiller subdivision to the Ohio Health Boulevard roundabout; expansion of the city's wastewater treatment plant; and installation of the first outdoor tornado warning device in the Southeast Gateway.

The southwest portion of Delaware is poised to experience "significant growth," Efland said, and several new businesses opened or became fully functional in that quadrant in 2007.

Those businesses including AHP, V&P Hydraulic, which manufactures custom hydraulic cylinders and accessories, and Sky Climber, which produces hoists, rigging solutions and modular work platforms.

Also, several new projects are planned for that area, including a north American Bus Industries facility, a PPG Industries Inc. expansion, and the extension of Sawmill Parkway from the from the south up to Section Line Road.

# Commercial, infrastructure projects dominate London's development scene

By MELANIE MCINTYRE  
Daily Reporter Staff Writer

Though residential building has slowed in recent months, commercial development in London continues to hum along.

"Housing starts are down," especially in the starter home segment of the market, said David Eades, mayor of London.

He attributed the lag to problems in the loan industry and the fact that banks aren't approving financing for buyers as readily as they were a couple of years ago.

London homebuilder Regent Homes does seem to be having success, though, offering several houses in the \$200,000 to \$300,000 price range, he said.

It's likely that homes at those price points are sellers because their owners have good jobs and money from the sale of their first houses for a sizable downpayment, Eades continued.

One of the most notable projects in London's development pipeline is construction of Building Systems Transportation's 110,000-square-foot building at its headquarters on East High Street, he said.

The building will be the national freight carrier, broker and regional warehouse's third at its campus.

In addition, American Biodiesel LLC is planning to open a facility in late summer or early fall and construction on Eagleton Retail Center is complete, he said.

MTB Development Co. is leasing space at Eagleton, which spans 33,000 square feet and is located at the northwest corner of U.S. Route 42 and Eagleton Boulevard.

Already, the center has attracted several new businesses including women's fitness center Curves; Peking House, a Chinese buffet; Advantage Bank; real estate office Re/Max Team Advantage; East Lawn & Garden Center; and a Sherwin Williams paint store.

Eagleton Center is part of a larger project — the 563-acre Eagleton Village — on London's north side.

The city's infrastructure also stands to be improved, as its wastewater treatment plant will undergo a \$32 million expansion, which is expected to be completed in 2009, Eades said.

Further, London will begin expansion of Kenny Boulevard to state Route 38, which will give those traveling to and from London High School an alternate route (as they currently have to cut through downtown.)

Engineering work will start this year and Eades said the city hopes the project will be done by 2010.

London officials also have turned their attention to the city's bicentennial celebration in 2011.

The city of London, along with Madison County, will be celebrating its 200th anniversary with events beginning March 1, 2011 and extending through the remainder of the year.

A seven-person steering committee began meeting in 2007 to plan the festivities, Eades said.

Delaware

London





# Lancaster's growth continues as manufacturers add jobs in community

By MELANIE MCINTYRE  
Daily Reporter Staff Writer

A mix of residential and commercial projects are keeping development in Lancaster alive and well.

This spring, Southgate Corp. has been in the midst of building its third set of 45 condominiums along Wesley Way on the city's east side, and Rockford Homes has been working on a 40-unit condo development on Fair Avenue, said Mike Pettit, Lancaster's economic development director.

The city's single-family home market currently is dominated by four builders — Rockford, Dominion Homes, DiYanni Homes and Maronda Homes. And once those builders finish the developments they were working on during First Quarter 2008, the city will gain 150 to 200 new homes, he said.

"2007 was slower than 2006 for new builds and we don't see that changing any time soon," Pettit said, though he added he doesn't expect a complete downturn either because job growth in the area has been favorable.

Over the past year, the community also has gained several assisted living facilities, including the Inn at Fairfield Village, a 90-unit facility off state Route 37, northeast of Ohio University's Lancaster campus.

Commercial development continues to thrive along Ety Road, particularly at Ety Pointe Center, which will comprise more than 500,000 square feet of retail space upon completion.

A Max & Erma's restaurant, Fat Cat Pizza, and a Giant Eagle grocery are among the prominent eateries and retailers to be housed at the center.

Kohl's department store and Sonic, a fast-food

restaurant, opened there in October 2007, while a Menards home improvement store and a Wal-Mart under construction near Memorial Drive are slated to open this spring, he said.

Other significant commercial development happenings include last summer's opening of the Oatney Professional Building at 121 E. Sixth Ave. and the \$26 million Fairfield Medical Center expansion, which added a parking garage and an office tower, Pettit said.

Meanwhile, several manufacturers are steadily adding jobs to the area.

In February, corrugated packaging and display producer U.S. Corrugated Inc. (headquartered in Newark, N.J.) announced plans to build a manufacturing plant in Lancaster that would employ more than 100 people and glassware producer Anchor Hocking Corp. (which has a distribution center in town) said it will add 125 jobs over the next three years.

A 20,000-square-foot Drew Shoe Corp. expansion and the addition of 20 jobs at Diamond Power International Inc. also are in the works, he said.

Mondi Packaging wrapped construction on a 40,000-square-foot expansion during First Quarter 2008.

In August 2007, the Fairfield 33 Development Alliance began rounding up private-sector leadership for a resource development campaign that Pettit said could bring additional businesses to Lancaster.

The aim is to generate \$250,000 a year over five years for a comprehensive economic development plan what will encourage job creation and future investment in Fairfield County, of which Lancaster is the county seat.

In early 2007, the Fairfield County Commissioners pledged \$30,000 a year over five years to the campaign.

# Industrial expansions expected to highlight Newark's 2008 growth

By MELANIE MCINTYRE  
Daily Reporter Staff Writer

Development in Newark is expected to proceed at a measured pace this year as various commercial projects move through the pipeline.

In 2008, the city likely will experience steady growth, though most of it will be industrial expansions rather than residential ventures, said Stephen Fowler, Newark's economic development director.

In March, the Mid-Ohio Development Corp. announced it would apply for a \$3 million grant through the state's Job Ready Sites Program to clean up a former industrial site on Union Street.

Should the grant be awarded, the 42-acre site could be available for a new user by 2010. The grant would allow Mid-Ohio, which currently uses some of the buildings onsite for storage, to demolish a water tower and carry out asbestos abatement.

However, the company, the city, or both would have to contribute a 25 percent funding match.

Officials at Mid-Ohio, which builds, develops and manages residential and commercial properties, said they expect to hear from the state by mid-September.

In 2007, E85 Inc., based in the Seattle suburb of Kingston, was considering construction of a \$150 million to \$175 million state-of-the-art ethanol plant on Newark's west side. The facility was to be located on a 78-acre site at 595 Thornwood Drive and was scheduled to be

operational by year-end 2008. E85 abandoned the plan because it deemed the site too small for necessary rail infrastructure, Fowler said.

Immediately upon learning that E85's plant was a no-go, city officials began exploring other possible uses for the site, which includes 3.5 acres zoned for limited business, 6.3 for multi-family, eight for general business, 20.2 for condominiums and 37.9 for manufacturing.

Meanwhile, construction of a small strip plaza — with four to five storefronts — was completed off Country Club Drive in 2007 and work is progressing on a new ramp connecting Hudson Street with state Route 16 in downtown Newark, Fowler said.

In addition, the Newark City School District has been adding and revamping schools to accommodate growth and upgrade older buildings.

The district, which serves 46,300 residents, will spend \$130 million to build four new elementary schools and two middle schools, and renovate the remaining facilities, which will include the addition of an auxiliary gym at the high school.

In light of the recent housing slump, perhaps it is unsurprising that residential development in Newark was virtually nonexistent last year. In fact, no lots were approved for platting in 2007, according to the Licking County Planning Commission, though almost 200 lots were approved in 2006.

Further, the average sale price of homes in Newark dropped to \$93,229, a 13 percent decrease from the previous year.



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## Marysville continues to invest in infrastructure, prepare for managed growth

By CHRIS SCHMENK  
For The Daily Reporter

Like the lawns fertilized by its largest employer's products, the city of Marysville continues to grow steadily.

Home of The Scotts Miracle-Gro Co., Marysville has developed into a city of about 18,000 residents located just 15 minutes northwest of Interstate 270.

To accommodate its growth, the city has undertaken two major infrastructure projects, both of which are scheduled for completion in 2008.

A new Water Reclamation Facility, located along state Route 33, just south of the city, will double the city's wastewater treatment capacity to 8 million gallons per day and a 1 billion gallon Upland Water Reservoir will store and ensure availability of high-quality water for residents.

Those projects will not only benefit Marysville residents, but also the remainder of the city's utility service area along the route 33 corridor between Marysville and Dublin to the southeast.

As the largest community in our county, it is imperative that Marysville continues to invest in its infrastructure and prepare itself for managed growth.

The Marysville School District is keeping pace with population growth in the county. In Fall 2008, Marysville Exempted Village School district will complete a second addition to Marysville High School that will include 100,000 additional square feet of classroom space, a media center, a fieldhouse and an enlarged commons area.

Additionally, the Bunsold Middle and Intermediate Schools are currently under construction.

Marysville continues to experience residential growth with various developments throughout the community.

In 2007, 108 single-family units were constructed with a value of more than \$22 million. And since 2003, 839 single-family units and 124 multi-family units have been constructed in Marysville.

Several large commercial developments also continue to move forward.

Coleman's Crossing, located at U.S. 33 and Delaware Avenue, has added an Office Max, MC Sports, Buffalo Wild Wings, Asian Buffet, First Federal Bank and soon will add Jack's Aquarium.

Across Delaware Avenue, City Gate now includes a Bob Evans, Boston's Gourmet Pizza, Walgreen's, Delaware County Bank and Liberty National Bank.

In total, those two developments contain more than 150 acres, making the area the largest commercial development in Union County.

The Mill Valley Plaza, at U.S. 33 and state Route 31, and

Standing Stone Office Park, at U.S. 33 and state Route 4, added much anticipated retail and office space for the city's business community.

In 2008, the Ohio Army National Guard will open the Marysville Training and Community Center housing two guard units and a gym, kitchen and classrooms adjacent to the Union County Family YMCA.

There are several other projects in the queue for 2008, including the addition of a Lowe's, which will occupy the vacated Wal-Mart building lot at East Pointe Plaza; reconstruction of Union Rural Electric Cooperative's corporate offices; White Castle at City Gate; La Cascada Mexican Restaurant in the Coleman's Crossing subdivision; and Mill Valley Pediatrics at U.S. 33 and state Route 31.

Perhaps most importantly, the historic Uptown Business District is experiencing a much needed revitalization.

Old Bag of Nails will open its ninth restaurant in uptown Marysville and join Windsock Hobby Shop and Light Salon as new merchants, and the Union County Commissioners have committed \$3.1 million to convert a former furniture store into an historic replica office building.

The city hopes to secure grants in 2008 to renovate additional building facades and restore the Town Run waterway that meanders through uptown.

In addition, a potential Scotts Miracle-Gro museum, a law office, and a bakery are in their planning stages.

Since 2005, uptown Marysville has drawn more than \$5 million in public and private investment.

"The Union County Chamber is proud of the accomplishments and developments in Marysville and is excited about its bright future," said its president, David Thorbahn.

"The chamber will continue to support the city with its economic development efforts and will always promote improvements to the community's quality of life," he continued. "With a successful 2007 and a bright future, Marysville continues to look for opportunities for growth and development."

"Major employers, such as Scotts Miracle-Gro, Nestle, Goodyear,

Parker, Sumitomo, and Univenture, provide a solid business foundation for the city. A strong school district, Memorial Hospital of Union County, and numerous community organizations combined with Marysville's growth and development ensure that Marysville's best is yet to come."

*Chris Schmenk is mayor of the city of Marysville. Kathy House, director of administration for the city of Marysville, and Eric Phillips, economic development director for the city of Marysville contributed to this article.*

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