

**VILLAGE OF BALTIMORE
MAYOR'S COMMUNITY UPDATE
AUGUST 14, 2007**

Highlights

I held a Community Update on August 14, 2007 to inform the Baltimore community on the various projects presently impacting the village. A panel consisting of Baltimore Downtown Restoration Committee Chair Kathy Badgely, Liberty Union-Thurston School Superintendent Paul Mathews, Village Administrator Marsha Hall, Councilmember and Service Committee Chair Tony House, Police Chief Michael Tussey, and I were the presenters. The presentation detailed PROGRESS in the village.

I reported on Planning and Progress, reporting that this administration continues to work public safety a priority for Baltimore residents. We now have a full-time Police Chief that is working forty hours a week, a new bike patrol, and new programs to keep our children safe from internet predators. Baltimore received its first tornado warning siren, which is now in operation.

Kathy Badgely's report highlighted her organization's cooperation with the village for Restoration and Revitalization of the downtown business district. She reported on the recently enacted Downtown Commercial Façade Grant program which will financially assist property owners with permanent façade improvements. Interested parties can obtain additional information regarding the program from the village offices, the village's website, or the Baltimore Downtown Restoration Committee.

The Ohio School Facilities Commission school projects was the subject of Paul Mathews' presentation. The original "Master Plan" for LU-T school facility improvements was approved by the state's Controlling Board in 2001. Of that plan, the elementary school addition and renovation was completed; the new middle school and minor upgrades to the high school remains. In May of this year, the state updated their assessment of district facility needs. Not surprisingly, the 2007 cost projects for a new middle school have gone up since 2001. To a point, that was to be expected. However, the 2007 revised assessment has now updated the high school upgrades to more than six times their original estimates. This forces the district to look at several options. The schools first Strategic Planning Committee meeting for the 2007/2008 school year will be held on September 20th at 7:00pm in the high school library. As always, community members are invited to participate.

Village Administrator Marsha Hall reported on Grants and Funding for village projects and an update of the village's Economic Development plans. She indicated that the current wastewater treatment plant upgrade and an on-going Water System Master Plan is being funded through low interest (2.75%) loans through the Ohio EPA. The Southeast Force Main and Lift Stations project is being financed by a grant and loan combination by the Ohio Public Works Commission, with just a small local up front match required. The village has also been awarded a Ohio Department of Natural

Resources Natureworks grant for the construction of an additional ballfield at Alt Park. She also discussed current new businesses and the village's plans to attract additional businesses.

Responsible planning was the topic of Councilman House's presentation. He spoke about Council's commitment to the 2004 Land Use Plan developed by a steering committee of residents, school officials, business owners, and village administration. He also detailed Council's vision of financing needed water system upgrades as the current sewer debt service charges are reduced so that residents do not have to continue to pay higher debt service fees.

Chief Tussey discussed newly created programs to assist with Safety issues within the village. These include a bike patrol program partnering with the community for better safety. Three organizations paid for the cost of the bikes and equipment - the Baltimore Chamber of Commerce, the Baltimore Lions Club, and the Baltimore Rotary Club. He also discussed transient crime or the phenomena where criminals will travel a considerable distance to commit criminal activity and then return to their home. Chief Tussey introduced future an internet safety program and senior safety program the department will be implementing.

I ended the presentation discussing Services to our residents. The village's website, www.baltimoreohio.org, continues to be upgraded as a service to the community. New features include the ability of visitors to the website to report on potholes, report a property maintenance problem, and request several items from the police department's area, including requesting vacation checks and reporting speeding problems. Later this Fall, the village will begin offering on-line banking to its residents for the payment of water and sewer bills. Also, the state has approved additional modifications to the municipal offices to allow visitors to enter the building without having to step down.