

2010 State of the City Address

Welcome to the 2010 State of the City address, highlighting the year 2009.

Kettering is a proud and resilient community. For many, 2009 was a year that represented great difficulty and yet I will illustrate for you throughout this address the many ways in which we responded to adversity, rose above circumstances and continued to be the community of choice to Live Work and Play.

We all watched with great sadness the decline of an industry upon which this region was built. The pioneers of this community were instrumental in making great strides in the automotive industry. Charles Kettering and Edward Deeds – great men, great thinkers, great innovators. They didn't just fiddle with great ideas – they made great things happen. The regret that we have for the end of the automotive era is felt deeply here – it's our history; it's our proud heritage. The harsh reality became clear to us in profound ways as many families lost employment, health insurance and retirement. And it wasn't just the GM, Delphi and Automotive Supplier closures that affected our families. The loss of NCR a blow, again, not only to the heritage of this region, but to many of you. Many companies downsized and no one was immune to the economy.

Even so, we began to see the determination of this community to overcome. When a neighbor suffers, we all suffer. And in that spirit we rallied to the best of our ability to support one another. I'd like to share with you now some of the services, programs and events that the City implemented in 2009 in order to support our families in need:

Federal and state stimulus dollars allowed our Community Development division to create programs that benefit families *and* neighborhoods.

Almost \$800,000 worth of stimulus money will be used to make neighborhood improvements, including the rehabilitation of foreclosed homes and the construction of new homes in existing neighborhoods.

More than \$20,000 worth of stimulus money will be utilized to provide energy audits for low income Kettering residents. In addition, the Community Development division will use additional stimulus dollars to address the energy deficiencies identified in the audits.

Our Community Development division, which is always striving to provide affordable housing and improved housing opportunities to Kettering residents, also:

- assisted 11 first time homebuyers with down payment and closing cost assistance to buy Kettering homes
- assisted residents with 16 housing rehabilitation projects
- completed 7 grants for the installation of hard wired smoke detectors
- completed 3 grants for residential accessibility by installing ramps and entryways assisted in funding the City's first Habitat for Humanity project, making way for the construction of a new home in the Wiles Creek neighborhood and funded 24 units of affordable senior housing in conjunction with the Franklin Foundation.

This is our 3rd partnership with the Franklin Foundation to provide quality, affordable housing for seniors.

And Community Development continued to manage a foreclosure-counseling program in partnership with the Homeownership Center of Greater Dayton that served 86 clients, helping most to achieve a workable solution between the homeowner and lender.

Our Parks Recreation and Cultural Arts department participated greatly in our efforts to make opportunities accessible to all families in Kettering.

In 2009 Parks Recreation and Cultural Arts facilitated after school enrichment programs in all Kettering elementaries. These free, instructor led activities gave youth a great variety of clubs in which to participate after school, such as music, science and cooking club.

A partnership was created with Kettering schools in which a school community liaison took referrals for families in crisis from Kettering school counselors.

The 7th annual Cops n Kids camp was conducted by Kettering Police Officers. This is a free camp that encourages the positive interaction between youth and law enforcement.

In addition to Cops n Kids, Parks & Rec offered two new free sports camps, which were held at Beavertown Elementary in direct response to the economic struggles of the community and the need for safe enriching summer programming.

Camp Sunsational, a full day summer camp with a lower price point was created to serve Kettering families with limited resources.

The Kettering Giving Tree program provided 600 gifts to Kettering children in 2009 with the help of many individuals, businesses, churches and organizations who gave generously in response to our greatest need to date.

Fraze Pavilion made a conscious effort in 2009 to keep ticket prices low due to the tough economic environment. We had over 35 events during the summer that were either free or had ticket prices \$20 or less.

And our youth were active in our efforts as well as our Partners for Healthy Youth hosted the Community Day of Service on April 24. More than 300 youth and adults representing 12 community organizations completed property maintenance on 15 Kettering homes and held 5 car washes that raised \$1800 for the Kettering Backpack Program. This program, born from the Kettering Leadership Academy, sends backpacks of food home for the weekend, with students who might otherwise go hungry.

Our Senior Transportation program provided ten thousand rides to medical and dental appointments, shopping trips and other life essential destinations for Seniors in Kettering.

More than 1500 seniors received tax assistance at the Lathrem Senior Center and 500 seniors received the seasonal flu shot there.

Our Senior Services Coordinator assisted 25 seniors in attaining Veteran's Benefits, and Kettering implemented Check Up Call in 2009 – a free service that phones participating seniors daily to ensure their health and safety.

At every possible turn City staff and our community partners have worked to make this difficult year a little less challenging for our neighbors in need. Many thanks to the partnerships and support that helped to make these programs possible. And many thanks to you, our residents who do the work of helping one another without acknowledgement and without fanfare – you are what makes this city a community.

Another very important way that we were able to respond to the challenges of 2009 was through Economic Development. While there was little we could do to avoid much of the downturn in the economy, what we could do was continue our emphasis on maintaining and attracting businesses. We achieved many successes on that front as 2009 saw the expansion and growth of *some* companies and the introduction of new business as well.

Reynolds and Reynolds continued their support and commitment to Kettering with the relocation of 75 finance and insurance division jobs from Georgia to their headquarters in the Miami Valley Research Park. In addition, they opened their 15,000 square foot Data Center in 2009, representing a twenty million dollar investment to our community.

Construction began on the Benjamin and Marian Schuster heart hospital at the Kettering Medical Center campus in 2009. This impressive addition is six stories with five floors dedicated to patient service. The seventy million dollar investment will help the hospital toward their goal of becoming an all-private room facility; a trend that Dr. Schuster says makes the patient experience more successful and satisfying.

The transformation of the Groby's property to the new Charlotte Gardens is well underway as First Financial Bank opened its doors in 2009, as did the relocated Chipotle Mexican Grille. Construction of a 10,000 square foot office building is complete at the site, and is home to a military recruitment office. We hope to see construction beginning on Dewey's Pizza this year.

Alternate Solutions Home Care made one million dollars worth of improvements to their Dorothy Lane location in 2009, not only making considerable façade improvements, but making room for the addition of approximately 25 more full time employees to their existing employment base of 55.

The Miami Valley Research Park had a very successful 2009 with the Reynolds expansion and also with the addition of the Dayton Clinical Oncology Program to the Tech Center Four building. D-COP relocated from 3,000 square feet on Southern Boulevard to 7,000 square feet at the Research Park, adding employees to their existing 20 person staff.

And perhaps the biggest economic development news in 2009 was the announcement by the Community Blood Center's Community Tissue Services to locate their brand new state of the art 90,000 square foot facility to the Research Park. Make no mistake about it; this development is incredibly significant for this community. Not only is this a 40 million dollar investment, but Community Tissue Services perform groundbreaking work in the education, recovery, processing and distribution of bone, skin and tissue grafts – literally saving and changing the lives of the people who benefit from their mission.

I mentioned the ways in which the City is utilizing federal and state stimulus dollars to help Kettering families through our Community Development division.

In addition to these efforts Community Development also worked with the City's Board of Community Relations to host a new program called the Tenant Rights Workshop in

October, a spin off to our well-established Landlord Rights workshop, held annually. They also lent their support to the annual Martin Luther King Jr Celebration.

Community Development works under the department of Planning and Development, another department that works to make Kettering a great place to live and work.

The Building Division received the Miami Valley Tech-Prep Consortium award for assisting Kettering Fairmont High School in building a home in the Wiles Creek neighborhood.

The Property Maintenance Division worked with many property owners in 2009 to address property maintenance issues that ranged from 2,000 property related issues to a thousand tall grass cases. By working with the property owners, property maintenance inspectors were able to obtain an 86% compliance rate for commercial property maintenance issues and found overall greater property maintenance compliance in targeted neighborhoods in 2009.

This continues to be a major focus for the City and one that we will continue to address with the utmost of consideration on all fronts.

Things were busy in the city's Engineering department in 2009 as capital improvement projects totaled 7.2 million dollars. Major roadway projects included the complete resurfacing of Far Hills Avenue from corporation line to corporation line. This project was completed in time for the Holiday at Home parade.

Phase 3 of the South Dixie Reconstruction was a 1.4 million dollar project, 80% of which was covered by a Federal Highway grant through the Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission. New curbs, sidewalks, pavement, storm sewer and street lighting were installed on South Dixie from Dorothy Lane to 200 feet north of Cardington Road.

New curbs, drive approaches and sidewalk panels were installed on Acorn Drive to further enhance the 2007 reconstruction of Acorn and surrounding streets.

A Safe Routes to School Improvement took place on Delaine Avenue with the construction of new curbs and sidewalks along Delaine Avenue from the north entrance to Fairmont High School to Lewiston road. This project was largely funded by a grant from ODOT's Safe Routes to School program, lending to the safety of students who walk to school on this section of Delaine.

Our Public Service Department continued their good work in 2009 with response to 19 snow and ice events that culminated in the usage of 3700 tons of salt. Much attention was given to "salt availability" last year but the City of Kettering was able to acquire reasonable rates for salt distribution and the department only used two thirds of the salt required for 2008. Most important was the fact that the department provided reasonably safe transit around and through Kettering during the snow and ice season.

Our Leaf Pickup program continued to be one of our more widely used programs as crews picked up 1,847 truckloads of leaves that totaled 33,500 cubic yards. As many of you know, these leaves will be processed at the City's composting site to be available to you in the spring as leaf mulch. In 2009 8,423 cubic yards of leaf mulch were distributed to Kettering residents at no charge, 2,664 cubic yards were utilized in city parks and other public properties, 129 cubic yards were provided to other public entities and 744 cubic yards were sold to private entities.

Our Public Service department was also instrumental in the support of the move of four buildings from the Kettering Moraine Museum site to Carillon Park in conjunction with Dayton History. Over the next year, we will be finishing the restoration of the old museum site.

Public Safety in Kettering continued to give us reason to be proud in 2009 as the City's police department received full accreditation for the 22nd year. In addition the

department was once again recognized by the accreditation board as a Flagship agency. Kettering Police conducted a variety of programs throughout the year including a very successful neighborhood watch program and citizen's police academy.

Our canine unit was not only effective but outstanding in 2009. Officer Brad Lambert and his canine partner Brix were certified as the Department's first dual purpose canine unit and Officer Clint Price and his canine partner Bandit won several narcotic detection competitions across both state and national levels.

The School Resource Officers continued to be a strong and visible presence in our schools as they routinely attended events such as prom, homecoming and sporting events, maintaining a zero tolerance policy on drug and alcohol use.

The Kettering Fire Department spent a lot of 2009 out in the community as well, reaching a great number of people through public education programs.

Fire department personnel reached over 2200 people through fire safety talks, block parties, station tours and safety trailer events. The department certified more than 1,000 people in CPR and more than 300 child safety seats were installed for Kettering residents through monthly fitting stations at Station 32.

Several Life Saving Awards were given to Kettering Fire Department personnel who performed heroically on the job. In 3 separate emergencies, crews approached critical crisis situations, responded with life saving measures and ultimately ensured a full capacity return to life for the patients.

In addition to these remarkable events, the department gave two citizen commendations to youth who responded to crisis situations heroically in their own neighborhoods.

Kettering Fire crews responded to 7,178 incidents in 2009. The department was requested for 192 mutual aid responses around the region.

2009 saw the addition of 30 new volunteer firefighters as recruitment reached an all time high.

Not only do volunteer firefighters make up an integral corps of responders for the fire department but they also perform a large variety of community service by assisting with community events.

The City's nationally recognized ACTIVE volunteer program celebrated 30 years in 2009. This comprehensive and well-respected program provides immeasurable service to city functions and to the community at large.

A dedicated group of more than 1100 volunteers contributed almost 40,000 hours of service in 2009, valued at over \$700,000. This program and these volunteers are an integral part of the City's day-to-day business.

In October, the volunteer office assisted the street department with a day of service for national Make a Difference Day. Volunteers helped the City's "green" efforts by marking storm drains with medallions reminding residents not to dump materials in drains, as they flow directly into our waterways. This effort, coupled with Boy Scout service to the same, helped the City save tremendous resources.

The Kettering Leadership Academy graduated its 6th class in 2009. This program has produced local leadership beyond our expectations, as well as services and programs that benefit our entire community.

Also exceeding our expectations, the Kettering Mayor's Ball for Charity is entering its 4th year. The 2009 Ball benefited the Kettering Education Foundation to the tune of \$23,000. The 2010 event on April 24 promises to be just as successful as we gather to raise funds for Society for the Improvement of Conditions for Stray Animals - SICSA.

I've talked a lot to this point about the living and working aspects of Kettering and now I'd like to highlight the very important *playing* in Kettering. Residents of this City know very well that we have the best to offer in Parks Recreation and Cultural Arts. That is exactly why when we came to you in 2008 for a continuance of our Parks and Recreation Bond, you responded with overwhelming support. As a result, 2009 was a flurry of design for the projects that will ensue in the coming months.

You will begin to see the fruits of your support, first, in your parks. Beginning in the spring of this year you will see the first phase of park improvements underway and we're hoping to have many neighborhood parks under construction this year. Kennedy Park will be the first Kettering Park with a splash pad when it's complete.

Fitness expansion at the Rec Center and Water Park construction will begin in late summer of this year. Additions to the water park will include a taller, faster slide and many new amenities for families to enjoy.

In addition to bond levy project planning our parks recreation and cultural arts department was busy providing quality of life experiences for residents of Kettering.

In 2009 a special populations sports clinic series was developed featuring three special events, combining a sport clinic with prominent athletes and a demonstration. Over 150 families participated in the first event, a basketball clinic held at the Rec Center in conjunction with the UD women's basketball team and the Wright State wheelchair basketball team. The second event, held in conjunction with the Dayton Dragons, took place at Fifth Third Field and featured a skills clinic with five Dragon's players – participants received free tickets to that evenings game.

Overall the City achieved a successful sports camp season featuring 55 sessions of 23 different sports camps serving more than one thousand energetic youth participants.

Our ice rink not only provided open skate opportunities and hockey but also was the site for the Professional Skaters Association educational program designed to help coaches prepare for ratings exams. Our ice rink was one of only three sites in the United States selected for this event. In addition the Kettering ice rink hosted the United States figure Skating Association Skate Week Clinic.

From ice to water, three teams competed in the regional lifeguard competition finishing first, third and fifth out of fifteen teams and qualifying for the State Lifeguard competition.

Despite a national decline in adult softball participation, we saw an increase in both our summer and fall softball leagues, by 15 teams in the summer and 20 teams in the fall.

The playground for all at Indian Riffle Park was improved and re-opened in 2009 with new play features and soft surface material, making it even more accessible to children of all abilities.

Pondview Park construction added new decks, concrete pad learning centers, wetlands and a sensory garden. The new trail system makes the park more accessible. School children from the Kettering Elementary schools utilize this park as a learning center every year.

Our outstanding cultural arts department certainly lends to the quality of life in Kettering. In 2009 Rosewood Gallery was again recognized as a major exhibition space in the Miami Valley with three outstanding competitions and 7 individual artists exhibitions from throughout the United States.

Art on the Commons continues to be one of the most popular Frazee festivals, attracting 25,000 people in 2009 with 120 exhibitors from throughout the country.

Every year we're excited to bring new artists to the Frazee stage and 2009 was no exception. We welcomed The Steve Miller Band, Loggins & Messina and 38 Special - all groups that sold out along with Josh Turner, Joe Cocker, The Black Crowes and Joan Baez.

With a goal in 2009 to establish superior customer service, a guest services booth was established during each show where guests could get information regarding upcoming events and ask questions regarding the park, the grounds and the City of Kettering. The most often asked question - where are the restrooms!

Living, Working and Playing in Kettering is certainly alive and well when you reflect upon all of the things we talked about tonight. I know as I look back on all that took place in the City of Kettering in 2009 I am astounded by the commitment of residents, community groups, Council and our own city staff to the overall quality of life here in Kettering. 2010 promises the same commitment and the same quality of life.

In 2010 we are going to undertake Phase 3 of a Facilities Improvement Project here at the Government Center as we make some very necessary infrastructure changes to this building. In fact this will be our last City Council meeting here until the project is complete. We will be meeting in the Recital Hall at Fairmont High School for the year 2010. This project will take about a year to complete and *on* completion will offer you a much more user-friendly environment in which to do business. Our handicap accessibility will be much improved and our HVAC system will be much more cost effective. It is a temporary inconvenience, no doubt, but a project that simply had no better timetable than this one. To make way for construction City offices have been relocated and our temporary locations are listed at www.ketteringoh.org

Now we forge ahead into a new year, doing so cautiously, optimistically and with hope for prosperity for the people of Kettering. We know that no matter what adversity we might face, we will respond as a community with resiliency and pride. And we will

strive, as your Council and your City administration, to continue to make Kettering YOUR community of choice to Live Work and Play.

Thank you and God Bless.