

**KETTERING CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
January 26, 2016**

The Council of the City of Kettering, Ohio, met in regular session on Tuesday, January 26, 2016, at 7:30 p.m. in Council Chambers at the Kettering Government Center South Building, 3600 Shroyer Road. Mayor Don Patterson presided and the Clerk of Council, LaShaunah D. Lavender, recorded. This meeting was telecast live on the cable access channel.

Council Members Present: Patterson, Klepacz, Schrimpf, Scott, and Wanamaker

Council Members Absent: Duke and Lautar- Excused

Total Members Present: Five (5)

Mayor Patterson led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance and then gave the invocation. He introduced the cable TV operators Josh Strehle, Earl Jones, John McGimsey, and Jacob McGimsey. He thanked them for their assistance. The Pages this evening were Tiffany Perez and Ibraheem Hindi from Fairmont High School.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

January 12, 2016 – Council Meeting & Council Workshop Minutes

Mrs. Schrimpf reported that she reviewed the above minutes and moved the minutes be approved. Mr. Wanamaker seconded the motion and there being five (5) yea votes, and no (0) nay votes for the January 12, 2016 Council Meeting and Workshop Minutes, the motion was declared carried by roll call vote.

MAYORS STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS

Mayor Patterson gave the 2016 State of the City Address (See pages 4-11 of these minutes for text)

PROCLAMATIONS, SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS, AWARDS, SPECIAL RESOLUTIONS, APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Appointment Tawana Jones- Board of Community Relations (Term ending 12/31/18)

Mrs. Schrimpf made a motion to appoint Tawana Jones to the Board of Community Relations and Mr. Klepacz seconded this motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Public Hearing- Z.C. 918-15- Request for Zoning Text Amendment to EDO #8 to change approvals from Hearing Examiner to Zoning Administrator and to modify the Arbor Commercial Design Standards.

Mayor Patterson opened the Public Hearing and asked that any person that intends to speak to City Council about this matter should stand and take an oath. Those that planned to speak took the oath.

Mr. Tom Robillard, Planning & Development Director gave the presentation this evening. This request is for the Arbor Shopping Center located at the northwest corner of E. David Road and Far Hills Avenue. This change will accommodate the tenants inside of the shopping center. In order to make improvements, changes need to be made to the current Economic Development Overlay. This can expedite the process by removing the title of Hearing Examiner to Zoning Administrator. Also, a modification within the new Zoning Code needs to occur in order to ensure the design proposal is appropriate.

Mayor Patterson asked if there were any comments from the public either for or against. None were heard.

Mayor Patterson closed this Public Hearing and explained Council will consider legislation regarding this matter at a future Council Meeting.

ORDINANCES IN SECOND READING

RESOLUTIONS

A RESOLUTION
NO: 9734-16
BY: MR. SCOTT AND MR. KLEPACZ

AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO PURCHASE COMPUTERS AND SERVERS FOR
THE ANNUAL PC AND SERVER REPLACEMENT PROGRAMS

Mr. Scott read the above resolution and moved for approval. Mr. Klepacz seconded the motion.

The following votes were recorded: Mrs. Schrimpf, Yea; Mr. Klepacz, Yea; Mr. Wanamaker, Yea; Mr. Scott, Yea; Mayor Patterson, Yea. There being five (5) Yea votes, and no (0) Nay votes, the motion was declared carried and the resolution duly adopted.

A RESOLUTION

NO: 9735-16

BY: MR. KLEPACZ AND MRS. SCHRIMPF

AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ADVERTISE FOR BIDS AND TO CONTRACT FOR THE 2016 CURB, SIDEWALK AND DRIVE APPROACH REPAIR PROGRAM (PROJECT NO. 05-116)

Mr. Klepacz read the above resolution and moved for approval. Mrs. Schrimpf seconded the motion.

The following votes were recorded: Mrs. Schrimpf, Yea; Mr. Klepacz, Yea; Mr. Wanamaker, Yea; Mr. Scott, Yea; Mayor Patterson, Yea. There being five (5) Yea votes, and no (0) Nay votes, the motion was declared carried and the resolution duly adopted.

A RESOLUTION

NO: 9736-16

BY: MRS. SCHRIMPF AND MR. WANAMAKER

AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO APPLY FOR A GRANT FROM THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION MUNICIPAL BRIDGE PROGRAM

Mrs. Schrimpf read the above resolution and moved for approval. Mr. Wanamaker seconded the motion.

The following votes were recorded: Mrs. Schrimpf, Yea; Mr. Klepacz, Yea; Mr. Wanamaker, Yea; Mr. Scott, Yea; Mayor Patterson, Yea. There being five (5) Yea votes, and no (0) Nay votes, the motion was declared carried and the resolution duly adopted.

ORDINANCES IN FIRST READING

CERTIFICATIONS AND PETITIONS

MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Schwieterman, City Manager updated Council on upcoming and community events.

- Deadline to purchase a 2016 dog license is January 31, 2016.
- 26th Annual Dayton Works on Paper will be held at Rosewood Arts Centre Gallery on January 20, 2016 from 6:30-8pm.
- Kettering City Offices will be closed on Monday, February 15, 2016 to observe the President's Day holiday.
- Sweetheart Sunday Cycle Ride will be on Sunday, February 14, 2016 from 2-3:30 p.m. at the Kettering Recreation Complex.

OTHER BUSINESS NOT ON WRITTEN AGENDA

Communications and Reports

Audience Participation (5 Minute Limit per Speaker)

Mike Dowlar- 2590 S. Patterson Blvd. He received a letter in the mail from the Finance Department stating that he owes \$7,198.01 for one of the properties he owns. This amount is a charge from a 1996 sidewalk improvement. In 1996, his father was diagnosed with a brain tumor that qualified him for a 20 year deferment program. He believes his father was not aware of what he was signing. In 2008, Mr. Dowlar purchased his father's property and he was not aware of the assessment back in 1996. He asked Council for understanding about his situation in hopes that the 20 years of interest be waived. He believes that the original assessment of \$2,137.50 is his responsibility because it improved his property and also added value. Mr. Dowlar mentioned that if he was aware of this problem when he bought the house, he would have not let 20 years of interest accumulate.

COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mr. Duke reported:

- Absent.

Mr. Klepacz reported:

- He spent two full days at Trent Arena for Flying to the Hoop Tournament. There was a turnout of over 20,000 people.
- He got to present 6 people with certificates who were inducted into Fairmont Hall of Fame.
- Sister Cities will be hosting Spass Nacht on June 15, 2016.
- He had a chance to talk to Mr. Duke he is hoping to be back in two weeks.
- He encouraged residents to continue to shop local.

Mrs. Schrimpf reported:

- She attended her first Welcome Dayton meeting.
- Board of Community Relations will be hosting a MLK writing contest until the end of the month.
- The State of the City Address was excellent.
- She is happy to have Mr. Duke back soon.

Mr. Lautar reported:

- Absent.

Mr. Scott reported:

- The 2016 State of the City Address was great.
- He thanked residents for making Kettering great.
- He hopes Mr. Duke feels better soon.

Mr. Wanamaker reported:

- He mentioned that the Mayor and Stacy did a great job with the State of the City Address.
- Kettering Starter had a great article on snow and ice control.

Mayor Patterson reported:

- He thanked Stacy and Carl for doing a great job on the State of the City Address.
- He thanked residents for making Kettering great.
- He attended P-Dac Operation with Mrs. Schrimpf on January 13, 2016.
- Flying to the Hoop is always a great event to attend. He congratulated Fairmont for hosting this event.
- He attended the Dayton Development Coalition annual meeting this evening. He congratulated Dr. Dan Curren for receiving the Community Service Award.

They're being no further business to come before this meeting of the Kettering City Council; Mayor Patterson adjourned the City Council Meeting at 8:32 p.m.

ATTEST:

DONALD E. PATTERSON, MAYOR

LaShaunah D. Lavender
Clerk of Council

Welcome. On behalf of your Kettering City Council, I am honored to share the 2015 State of the City.

Kettering, Ohio is a community our residents are proud to call home. We recently conducted a community survey to get feedback on all city amenities and services.

We are exceptionally proud that 97% of our residents are satisfied or very satisfied with living in Kettering. Nearly 75% of our residents have recommended moving to Kettering to a friend or family member.

This remarkable level of satisfaction is reached because our city departments, each award winning and renowned for excellence, are made up of caring, dedicated professionals who love working for our community.

One of the greatest signs of a thriving community is reinvestment.

When large corporations, family owned businesses and our residents make a commitment to re-invest in their properties it is a vote of confidence for the future strength of our city.

With that in mind we are excited about some of the wonderful private redevelopment projects that began in 2015, like Town & Country Shopping Center, The Kettering Hospital Cancer Care Center and Alternate Solutions Healthcare.

The City of Kettering is committed to reinvestment as well. Kettering strategically devotes a great deal of our resources to maintain our infrastructure and promote both residential and commercial development.

We were hard at work throughout the city in 2015 on projects to improve where you live, work and play.

Kettering is the community of choice with residential properties for every family size, life stage and budget.

Kettering helps to protect your property investment by providing services that ensure our neighborhoods remain strong and vibrant.

Our award winning Community Development Block Grant Program offers many programs and comprehensive services to assist homeowners in Kettering with revitalizations to their properties.

This year the program supported the renovation of 25 homes for eligible residents.

Additionally CDBG funds were used to demolish 4 blighted, delinquent properties in Kettering.

Our down-payment assistance program served 10 first-time home buyers.

In partnership with the Homeownership Center, we assisted more than 100 Kettering homeowners at risk of losing their properties with foreclosure counseling and an additional 120 individuals with homebuyer training.

Our Smoke Detector Grant Program provides an opportunity for income qualified Kettering homeowners living in targeted neighborhoods to receive funds to upgrade their fire detection systems. 16 residents took advantage of this program in 2015.

We used federal funds to construct a new home in the Wiles Creek neighborhood that was sold to a qualifying family in October 2015.

We also used HOME program funds to support the Habitat for Humanity construction of a new home on Elmdale Drive.

Our community survey showed that 89% of our residents are pleased with the appearance of our stable and attractive neighborhoods.

A well-kept neighborhood says that residents take pride in their community.

Our Property Maintenance Code Enforcement team enforces the standards established by our Property Maintenance Task Force to enhance and protect both residential and business properties.

We do this because we firmly believe that high quality property maintenance directly impacts the perception of our community, which in turn impacts the value of your property.

Our enforcement team responded to more than 3500 complaints, with many citations for basic property maintenance.

In cases where we could not gain voluntary compliance from the homeowner to address the overgrown vegetation, we took bold action to protect our neighborhoods.

We contracted to have the grass and weeds cut at 253 properties and billed the expense to the homeowner.

We identified 6 nuisance properties, 3 of which were demolished removing the negative impact on the neighborhood.

Survey results show that nearly 70% of our residents recognize the efforts of the city to enforce property maintenance with more than 85% reporting that property maintenance in their neighborhood has stayed the same or improved in recent years.

Just as Kettering is aggressively addressing violations of our property maintenance standards, we are enthusiastically celebrating our residents and businesses that go above and beyond to show the pride they have in their properties.

As a way to recognize and promote these improvement efforts, the City of Kettering sponsored the Neighborhood Pride Awards Program for the 27th year.

The Neighborhood Pride Award recognizes residents and businesses that have made significant improvements to their home or business or have maintained their places impeccably year after year. In 2015 more than 400 properties were nominated and 37 awards were presented.

Your property is your greatest investment and your greatest opportunity to show your Kettering pride. Curb appeal matters and we encourage residents and business owners alike to complete at least one project this year that will enhance your property. Even the smallest spruce up can make a big difference.

Kettering has grown significantly over the past 60 years. Accordingly it was time to update our zoning code, the primary tool that will shape and influence how our community develops in the next 60 years. The goals of the new code are to preserve and enhance our existing neighborhoods, promote reinvestment in our community and streamline the zoning approval process for all applicants.

Essential to the vitality and welfare of our neighborhoods are our city services like trash collection, leaf pick up and snow removal.

Our recent survey indicated that better than 90% of our residents positively rate our city services.

On July 1, 2015 the City of Kettering entered in to a new contract with Waste Management for residential trash and recycling collection.

The new service provided by Waste Management features expanded choices in service levels. Residents have the option to contract for automated curbside collection which offers a significant annual savings compared to previous rates.

Residents who prefer to continue houseside collection have the option to contract for this service.

Trash and recycling totes in various sizes are provided to all residents at no additional cost.

In the community survey this fall, 88% of our residents report satisfaction with the new Waste Management services.

Our dedicated public service crews collected nearly 1500 truckloads of leaves over the 45 days of our annual residential leaf collection service.

That's an average of more than 33 truck loads per day, all converted to free mulch and compost available to our residents each spring.

Last winter, those same dedicated public service crews provided snow and ice control operations for 19 winter weather events between November 2014 and March of 2015.

More than 4,000 tons of salt was used to treat the roadways during this time.

City crews are responsible for the plowing and salting of 650 lane miles of roadways in the City of Kettering in an effort to keep you safe.

Speaking of safety, Kettering is exceptionally proud of our police and fire departments.

During 2015, the members of the Kettering Fire Department proudly responded to more than 8,400 calls for emergency services.

This response total represents a 7.5 percent increase in demand for services over 2014, including more than 620 additional emergency medical responses.

Our crews responded on a wide variety of alarms including Medical Emergencies, Structure Fires, Auto Accidents, and Haz-Mat and Technical Rescue incidents.

To ensure that our department is prepared to respond to these emergencies; our members proactively attended nearly 12,000 collective hours of training in 2015.

Our Kettering Fire Department continues to evaluate the service delivery needs of our community and to shape the Emergency Response Model to meet those needs in a timely and cost effective manner.

The City of Kettering will complete four new fire stations in coming years.

The new stations were sought as a result of a strategic planning process which began in 2006 and resulted in a comprehensive modernization strategy for all aspects of the Kettering Fire Department.

The traditional design of the new fire stations reflect our community and the modern facilities and technology will give us what we need to provide excellent emergency services to our residents and businesses.

The first station, Station 32 located at 3484 Far Hills Avenue began construction in 2015 and will be fully operational by the end of March.

In April, 2015 the City of Kettering broke ground on Station 36 which will be located at 4745 Hempstead Station Drive.

This facility will include features like a community room, emergency backup dispatch capabilities, the City of Kettering emergency operations center, as well as the department's administrative offices.

Construction is scheduled to be complete on this facility in 2016. Design is underway for a third station to be located on Woodman Drive near Tenneco.

The fourth and final station will be located at a yet to be determined site in west Kettering.

The Kettering Fire Department operates a comprehensive all hazards mitigation response model and we look forward to the new fire stations supporting the advanced nature of our services.

On April 2, 2015 Chip Protsman was sworn in as Kettering's new Chief of Police. As we conducted our search for the next Chief of Police, Chip Protsman impressed us with his professionalism, deep commitment to community relations, and his excellence in operational leadership. Please wish Chief Protsman and his family a warm Kettering welcome!

Under Chief Protsman's leadership we are reinvesting in our Kettering Police Department.

In an effort to strengthen our ties with the community and better protect officers and citizens, the Kettering Police Department will install cameras in every marked cruiser. These cameras will not only be on the dashboard looking out, they will also capture the rear seat of the cruiser. It is just another way we are investing in resources to serve you better.

We welcomed 9 new officers this year and we continue to recruit for more highly qualified law enforcement professionals. We enhanced our mission to protect public safety adding five new cruisers to our fleet. We added a new loyal member to our KPD team – K-9 Jax.

Known as Ohio's Finest, our police department proved they were once again deserving of that designation in 2015. The Kettering Police Department proudly earned Advanced Law Enforcement Accreditation with Excellence from the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, our ninth accreditation award since first earning the honor in 1987. We invest in this recognition because accreditation strengthens Kettering Police Department's accountability, both within our agency and the community it serves.

Kettering remains committed to investing in a full spectrum of services for older adults who have loyally supported our community for decades. In 2015 we made a significant reinvestment in Kettering Connection, reconstructing a new location within Town & Country Shopping Center. Kettering Connection is a one stop shop for information and referrals serving older adults or their family and friends responsible for their wellbeing. Our Kettering Senior Transportation Program provided more than 5300 affordable rides for medical appointments and errands critical to maintaining independence. More than 1700 tax returns were filed for seniors by volunteers.

The services provided by our Charles I. Lathrem Senior Center and our dedicated Senior Services Coordinator contribute to the mission of keeping Kettering seniors living a healthy, independent life in their homes. Help us accomplish this mission. If there is an older adult in your neighborhood, stop by every once in a while to see if they need help raking leaves, mowing the lawn or shoveling snow. Show them appreciation for supporting Kettering over the years and building the foundation of the strong and vital community we enjoy today.

The City of Kettering placed a focus in 2015 on improving community information and on strengthening our community identity.

We elevated our primary resident communication tool – Contact with Kettering – to a 16 page full color quarterly magazine. We also launched a new monthly e-newsletter "The Starter" that is a quick monthly update from the city full of news alerts, special events and service updates. We tripled the reach of our social media efforts, and we know from our recent survey that nearly 30% of our residents now follow us on Facebook or Twitter.

We know how important positive community identity is to creating a sense of belonging and loyalty here in the city. Little things can make a big difference. We started with the illuminated snowflakes in the area of Stroop and Shroyer Roads in winter 2015. In the same area, we introduced street banners last summer featuring signature images of Kettering that really created a sense of place and received rave reviews from our residents.

Because we believe in financial transparency and making city information accessible for our residents, the City of Kettering launched Checkbook Online in conjunction with the State of Ohio Treasurer's Office. The web based tool provides user friendly access to detailed city financial information.

The City of Kettering is committed to outstanding stewardship of our resources. In 2015 we earned the Government Finance Officers Association Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for the 30th consecutive year.

It is the highest form of recognition in governmental budgeting and represents significant achievement.

Kettering is one of only 1,400 government entities worldwide to receive the award.

For 31 consecutive years the City of Kettering has also been honored with The Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting.

In 2015 we were honored with the "Award with Distinction" for excellence in financial reporting from the Ohio Auditor of State.

The City of Kettering is constantly working on ways to innovate our services and provide valuable information about our community while making your interactions with us more efficient, convenient and satisfactory.

Our new 'Access Kettering' tool now available on the City of Kettering website, offers online access to many city services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

No more waiting for our offices to open to do business with the city.

You can now apply and pay for a residential or commercial construction permit, report a property maintenance concern in your neighborhood, apply for a right of way permit, request a city service and more - all online - at your convenience.

The Kettering Mayor's Ball for Charity is a volunteer driven annual black tie, fundraising event that benefits a Kettering non-profit.

The event was created by the Kettering Rotary Club and has raised more than 135,000 dollars since its inception.

In 2015 the Mayor's Ball raised over 19,000 dollars for the Kettering Backpack Program, an organization that provides weekend meals to Kettering children who might otherwise go hungry.

We thank Reynolds and Reynolds for providing an elegant backdrop for the Ball each year and the very dedicated group of volunteers who plan the evening.

In 2016 the Ball will benefit a cause near and dear to my heart, the Multiple System Atrophy Coalition. We hope you will join us on April 30th.

There is something about living in Kettering that is hard to put in to words.

It's the leadership of the students from Fairmont High School who raise tens of thousands of dollars for Kettering charities each year through the annual Spirit Chain competition.

It's the dedicated work of volunteers like Bill and Marynel Bradley who orchestrate the free Christmas Day at Polen Farm Open House for hundreds of residents who might otherwise spend the holiday alone.

We choose to be a community that time and time again demonstrates exceptional acts of caring and service to our neighbors.

Nothing makes me more proud to be your Mayor.

YOU ARE CRUCIAL to the continued strength of our neighborhoods.

When the time comes to move your growing family into a new home or to right-size to a smaller property later in life, we ask you to stay here in Kettering.

You certainly have friends and family who will be looking for a new home.

Please share with them the choices available in our community and encourage them to join you here in Kettering.

Our distinct neighborhoods and bordering commercial centers provide vibrant life for our community. Our roadways and infrastructure maintain the connection between where you live and where you shop, dine and work.

Our Engineering department oversaw 7.3 million dollars in roadway improvements last year, with more than 23% of the funding for those projects, or 1.7 million dollars, coming from grants leveraged by our investment.

We know from our residents that 82% believe we should prioritize investment in roadway improvements.

The Burchdale Street Bridge Replacement project was completed in 2015.

The project involved the replacement of an existing corrugated metal culvert with a more durable concrete culvert.

2015 brought much anticipated improvements to traffic and pedestrian safety on West David Road.

The project consisted of pavement reconstruction and overlay, new concrete curbs, drive approaches and a much needed sidewalk along the south side of West David Road.

I love driving the new roadway and seeing parents safely walking with their children, often pushing a stroller, using the new sidewalk that connects the neighborhoods along West David to Walther Park.

Safety improvements were also made to Far Hills Avenue.

The project involved the reconstruction of two traffic signals and upgrading roadway lighting.

The intersection of Bigger Road and Rahn Road was improved with new street lighting and a modern mast-arm traffic signal.

We resurfaced two major thoroughfares – County Line Road and Shroyer Road. Projects completed as part of our residential resurfacing and curb, sidewalk and drive approach repair programs enhanced the infrastructure of our neighborhood streets.

The Wilmington Pike corridor is the backbone of our community and it is vital to the strength of our commercial success. We invested \$10 million, with the majority of funds coming from grants, in infrastructure improvements to this roadway. The Wilmington Pike Improvement Committee, a group of business owners and community stakeholders, engaged in a strategic planning process to identify the most important challenges and promising opportunities for this essential corridor.

You probably noticed signs like this one at properties along Wilmington Pike. The signs identify properties that are being revitalized using the Wilmington Pike Façade Improvement and Demolition Programs.

The Demolition Program provides financial assistance to property owners along specific sections of Wilmington Pike to assist with the demolition of structures and clearance of sites for purposes of redevelopment. In 2015 the program assisted with the demolition of the former Payless Store at 2645 Wilmington Pike and the former Wonder Bread store at 3613 Wilmington Pike. Both of these properties are now owned by the City of Kettering and we are actively pursuing opportunities for reuse. 4125 Wilmington Pike (former Burger King restaurant) is privately owned and scheduled for demolition and redevelopment for a future Grismer Tire store.

The Façade & Site Improvement Program is available for exterior building façade or site improvements that encourage economic development activities. The property at 3600 Wilmington Pike was completed as a part of this program in 2015.

We continue to aggressively pursue private developers and commercial property owners to invest in the Wilmington Pike corridor and our efforts are paying off.

As I mentioned before, one of the greatest signs of a thriving community is reinvestment. When our Kettering businesses make a commitment to re-invest in their properties it is a vote of confidence for the future strength of our city. And what a vote of confidence we got in 2015.

Kettering Health Network broke ground on a brand new \$49 million comprehensive cancer care center. With a presence in many cities throughout the area, the City of Kettering is proud that Kettering Health Network chose to locate this signature regional facility on their flagship Kettering Medical Center campus.

Town & Country Shopping Center announced a multimillion dollar renovation project. The complete revitalization includes a modern façade, improvement to parking and landscaping and major building renovations to make way for new anchor stores TJ Maxx and Petco.

Alternate Solutions Healthcare recently announced a major expansion bringing more than 350 jobs to our community. The Kettering business purchased a 200,000 square foot facility at our Kettering Business Park.

Many smaller Kettering businesses chose to expand and stay here. The Carlisle House broke ground on their new Renaissance wing which is focused on care for memory impaired residents. International Corporation BWI renewed their commitment to Kettering signing a new 5 year lease. Synchrony Financial opened a career center to support recruitment for their Kettering operations center.

2015 was a great year for ribbon cuttings and grand openings of new businesses in Kettering. Advantic LLC relocated 20 jobs to Kettering in a 32,000 square foot building at 4254 Display Lane. We welcomed a Pri Med Physicians office building to our Kettering Business Park. Dayton History bought the former Neil's Heritage House and plans a complete renovation to house their administrative offices. And a long awaited signature independent restaurant by renowned local chef Dana Downs, Park City Cuisine, opened in the restaurant space near Civic Commons.

Kettering is a great place to work and an ideal place to locate your business. The City of Kettering Economic Development team is committed to assisting current Kettering businesses as well as potential new businesses in their journey to success.

We employ a variety of programs to encourage economic growth.

You have a choice each time you shop, go out to eat, use a service technician or craftsman for your home, and even when you buy gas for your car.

We ask that in this coming year you make an effort to choose a store, a restaurant, a provider, a gas station here in Kettering.

By doing so you are contributing to the wellbeing of our community and to the livelihood of your neighbors.

The employees of our Kettering businesses are not the only ones hard at work. Every day more than 1,000 city volunteers are dutifully giving of their time and talents to better our community.

Kettering is recognized nationally as a leader in the field of government volunteer programs and has been a model for many cities throughout the country.

In 1979, the City of Kettering was the first, in Ohio and nationwide, to formally initiate a volunteer program within city government.

We could not provide the level of services we do without our volunteers.

City volunteers of all ages give of their time, talent and heart to make Kettering the best it can be. This year our volunteers gave more than 34,000 hours of service, saving the city more than \$744,000. But you can't measure the program by its numbers alone.

Volunteers are truly an essential part of the city's day-to-day activities.

I am proud of the tradition of service in our Kettering community and I am thankful for each and every one of our volunteers.

We also know how fortunate we have been to have a dedicated public servant like Bonnie Pittl at the helm of our Volunteer Program for more than 20 years.

When we talk about programs like Cities of Service, the Kettering Leadership Academy and Kettering's Make a Difference Day we know that none of these efforts would be possible without Bonnie's dedication and leadership.

After more than 30 years of service to the City of Kettering, Bonnie Pittl will retire in the year ahead.

As I think back on her years of service to Kettering I can't begin to count the lives she has touched. Bonnie – thank you doesn't come close to capturing the gratitude City Council and city administration have for the volunteer programs and projects that have shaped the Kettering community, all because of your heart of gold.

Four years ago Kettering joined a national initiative titled "Cities of Service."

The purpose of the program is to use service to address a community's greatest need and in Kettering that need is neighborhood revitalization.

Each year we focus efforts on a targeted area – this year it is the Berwin Park neighborhood.

We offer monthly educational workshops, a neighborhood garage sale, a neighborhood clean-up and a neighborhood block party.

Thank you to the hundreds of volunteers who worked side by side with city staff on Make a Difference Day 2015.

It was a huge success! Volunteers from service organizations, churches, businesses, schools, universities and individual residents – all came to give back to their community.

There were two large tasks undertaken on Make a Difference Day. One project was held in conjunction with the city's ongoing "Cities of Service" initiative I just mentioned.

More than 120 volunteers assisted elderly residents with general clean up, removed leaves and yard debris and cleared overgrowth and trash from lots in the neighborhood.

The other project was completed at Christ United Methodist Church where over 100 volunteers assisted the Kettering/Centerville Kiwanis as they made 500 trauma dolls.

These dolls will be distributed to area hospitals for children to use when they enter the emergency room.

If you grew up or raised children in Kettering, you likely participated in Kettering Safety Village. Kettering Safety Village marked the 50th anniversary in 2015.

To commemorate the occasion the DorWood Optimist Club and Kettering Safety Section launched an entirely new and improved program.

All new realistic looking buildings, new pedal cars and streetscape with fully working traffic signals and signs were part of the revamped educational life-safety program.

Kettering is the community of choice for recreation and a great place to play.

Since 1991 the Frazee has served millions of customers and has gained many loyal and dedicated fans.

We are always researching ways to improve the experience for our customers.

Several renovations took place at Frazee Pavilion in 2015, aimed at enhancing the patron experience for the 24th season of the Summer's Best Music.

The signature fountains were renovated and now feature high efficiency mechanicals and lighting. And the beautiful new patio is a great spot for lunch in the park or location for special events.

A new spotlight tower was constructed in 2015 offering a permanent, elevated, enclosed lighting structure to securely house spotlights and operations personnel during performances. In addition to the technical improvements, the new tower serves as an updated signature entrance to the venue.

Last year more than 100,000 tickets were sold for Frazee shows, with ticket revenue exceeding \$3 million for the fifth year in a row.

Frazee ranked #45 out of 100 outdoor amphitheaters worldwide in 2015.

Each summer several artists make their Frazee debut and last season was no exception.

We welcomed REBA, Montgomery Gentry, 3 Doors Down, Bryan Adams, R5, Kristin Chenoweth and Old Crow Medicine Show.

REBA broke Frazee records for the fastest sell out in history – just 7 hours!

Work began in 2015 to improve the ponds at Lincoln Park and Delco Park.

The project at Lincoln Park includes removing and replacing all of the pond edging with a new natural looking retaining wall that will hold the bank in place and improve the pond's appearance.

We are using the old pond edging rock that is removed from Lincoln Park to replace sections of the pond edging at Delco Park.

For the past several years Kettering, along with many other communities throughout the Midwest, has been battling the Emerald Ash Borer.

This destructive, ash tree-killing insect has attacked and destroyed millions of trees in more than 25 states, and Kettering is no exception.

Since 2013 the City has been identifying ash trees in Kettering parks and City owned property.

By fall of 2016, approximately 291 ash trees will be cut down.

Over the next five to six years the trees will be replaced at a two to one ratio.

Still, there will be an immediate visual impact on our parks.

We will be removing 111 trees from Lincoln Park and 40 from Wenzler Park.

It will dramatically alter the look of some of our parks; however, it is absolutely necessary for the safety of our park visitors and the health of our tree population.

In 2015 the Suburbanscapes: Art Beyond the Metropolis initiative commemorated the 30th anniversary of Rosewood Arts Centre.

Participants celebrated Kettering's legacy through interactive artistic events, workshops and activities that explored our legacy as a suburb and a community pillar for creative expression and education.

The Healthy Heart, Healthy You initiative helped 1,500 individuals improve their overall wellbeing in 2015.

The program featured fun, engaging events for all ages including a Park Scavenger Hunt, Bike Event, 5k Costume Run/Walk, Family Fitness Night, World Tai Chee, Yoga and Zumba Classes.

As the new year begins, there is much to look forward to here in Kettering, Ohio.

The home of "Summer's Best Music" will continue to receive a face-lift, with new pavers and pedestrian lighting, as we prepare for the 25th Anniversary of Frazee Pavilion.

The line-up for the 25th Anniversary season will be one for the record books.

Visit www.fraze.com for weekly concert announcements about our 25th Anniversary Season and make plans to join us this summer!

November 11, 2015 was an extra special day here in Kettering, Ohio.

I was proud to pay tribute to our veterans and take part in a groundbreaking ceremony for the Kettering Veterans Memorial & Charles F. Kettering History Walk at Delco Park.

We eagerly await the dedication of the memorial on Veteran's Day 2016!

The coming year will also bring the completion of private redevelopment projects underway in Kettering

– the multi-million dollar revitalization of Town & Country Shopping Center;
the Kettering Cancer Care Center;
and Alternate Solutions Healthcare Network's relocation & expansion.

The City of Kettering is committed to reinvestment in our facilities and infrastructure as well, with several projects happening in 2016.

We will open the first two state of the art fire stations in our community and move forward on the remaining two.

We will complete many critical roadway reconstruction projects including the resurfacing of the entire length of Stroop Road with the addition of a multi-use path.

The ability to provide quality of life opportunities like senior services, beautiful parks, public art, recreation facilities and great outdoor music is such a big part of who we are as a community.

People locate here, stay here, and return here because of the range of world class amenities and services that make us unique – We are the community of choice!

Be assured that we will work tirelessly every day in 2016 and the years to come to maintain this quality of life.

May you and your families be healthy and prosperous in the New Year and on behalf of City Council and staff, thank you for choosing Kettering and allowing us to serve you. God bless!