



## Message from the Mayor

### State of the City of University Heights, Ohio: February 6, 2012

Dear Residents,

As I begin my third year as your mayor, I want to summarize the accomplishments of 2011 and let you know what is planned for 2012. One goal of the City Administration has been to increase communication and our accessibility, and we have done so in several ways:

- Several departments at City Hall were relocated within City buildings to create better workflow efficiencies and become more user-friendly to residents.
- New operating hours were instituted at City Hall in 2011 to better accommodate the busy schedules of residents.
- The "Welcome" packet for new residents was updated with useful information for citizens.
- For the second year, late-night hours were available on Wednesdays during the summer months for exterior inspections.
- For the first time, City Hall offered an on-line payment option for pool passes and for the convenience of residents moved the venue for pass purchases to the pool.
- Two community shredding and recycling days took place with plans to continue sponsoring these twice-yearly recycling days in the future.

We continued efforts begun in 2010 to expand green space for community use:

- In 2010 we established the City's first rain garden on Saybrook Road.
- In 2011, a community garden was developed on Taylor Road for vegetable and crop cultivation.
- Last spring, with grant money provided by the Sewer District, the City also installed a rain garden on Ashurst Road.
- Additionally, we created a new green space on Jackson Boulevard for neighborhood use.

A third goal of the City Administration is to expand our participation in collaborative and regional initiatives to continue the delivery of services to you in a cost-effective and efficient manner. This past year:

- The City entered into a new contract for garbage transfer services with Cleveland Heights to save employee time and the wear-and-tear on equipment when hauling garbage.
- As part of a twelve-city consortium of the County Solid Waste District, we began a new contract for processing recyclable garbage that pays us for our recyclable items.
- Additionally, the City's Vital Statistics Office was transferred to the City of Cleveland in a regional consolidation.

I am pleased to announce that we received a clean audit report from the State Auditor's Office in the most recent audit of the City's financial records. In these tough economic times we have made progress in controlling costs and the City has saved money through the use of grants for capital projects, reducing personnel costs, and implementing changes in our operations at City Hall. Grant money obtained in 2011 funded expensive upgrades to City buildings including:

- a new roof for one building,
- a rooftop air conditioning system for another building, and
- new energy-efficient windows for six buildings.

It is expected that these building improvements will result in lower utility costs in future years. Additional grant money obtained through a FEMA grant paid for the purchase of a new fire engine that was put into service last spring. A notable savings in operating costs occurred when City employees agreed to a multi-year pay freeze. City employees also accepted changes to their health care plans that result in higher deductibles, higher co-insurance payments, and a three-year schedule of graduated payments for health insurance premium costs. Full-time employee positions were reduced 6% for 2010 and in 2011 staff size was reduced another 5% due to retirements. We continue to study our spending patterns and look for ways to be efficient. Last year all supply ordering for City Hall buildings was consolidated under one employee to provide economies of scale.

Our overriding goal has been to find cost-savings in the delivery of services while maintaining the service level you have come to expect. I am happy to report that these cost-saving measures and efficiencies resulted in a \$1,300,000 surplus of revenue in 2011. To my knowledge, this is the largest surplus of revenue the City has ever reported. Although this is a much larger surplus than the City has had historically, I am mindful that we must be careful to protect this surplus and use a portion of it to offset cutbacks the City faces from State funding sources, such as the Local Government Fund and Estate Taxes, in 2012 and future years.

I have many plans for 2012 and will continue working to improve accessibility and communication:

- A new City website will be unveiled in the next few months offering easy access to information.
- Grant funds will pay for an illuminated message board at City Hall to provide an additional communication source for the community.
- Programs that make University Heights unique will continue, including the annual Memorial Day parade, the celebration of our beautiful homes and unique architecture through the Beautiful Homes Awards program, the Thursday evening summertime band concerts and ice cream socials held on the lawn of Wiley Middle School, and the popular Thursday afternoon lecture series at the Library sponsored by our Senior Services Office.

Our green space preservation efforts will continue, with plans for the County Land Bank to demolish a house on Silsby Road (near Allison Road) to create a new green space for community use. I will also work with the City Council to investigate the feasibility of acquiring the former Fuchs Mizrahi property for the purpose of creating a community park.

Cooperative regional programs will continue, such as the City's partnership with the Cleveland Water Department to replace obsolete waterlines in University Heights. New waterlines for Lansdale and Westwood Roads are scheduled for installation this year. We will participate with Shaker Heights in a joint bid for street resurfacing and roadway projects that will reduce costs for both cities. We continue to partner with the cities of South Euclid and Lyndhurst to offer the South Euclid-Lyndhurst recreation programming to our residents. University Heights and Shaker Heights will undergo a Cleveland Foundation funded study of shared municipal services that will consider the possible consolidation of fire service. Additionally, our Police Department will participate in a regional study of dispatch services with the cities of Euclid, South Euclid, Beachwood and Shaker Heights to consider the establishment of a regional police dispatch center. The rollout of County programs allowing municipalities to participate in county-run initiatives will also be considered if they are beneficial to our City.

I look forward to working with your City Council to build upon the strengths that make our community unique: our beautiful homes, our city services, our good relationship with John Carroll University, our efforts to expand park and recreation spaces, and our efforts to encourage a healthy business community in our City. I appreciate the confidence you have placed in me to work with the City Council for the continual growth of our community. As always, if you have any issue or concern about the City, please feel free to contact me by email at [mayor@universityheights.com](mailto:mayor@universityheights.com) or by phone at 932-7800 x222. Thank you.

Sincerely,



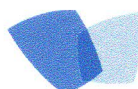
Mayor Susan Infeld

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## 2012 FEDERAL HOLIDAYS

City Hall offices will be closed on the dates listed below. **Trash pick-up will be delayed by one day. Please save this information for future use.**

**Monday, February 20 – Presidents' Day**  
**Monday, May 28 – Memorial Day**  
**Wednesday, July 4 – Independence Day**  
**Monday, September 3 – Labor Day**  
**Monday, November 12 – Veteran's Day**  
**Thursday, November 22 – Thanksgiving Day**  
**Tuesday, December 25 – Christmas Day**



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