

***Fairview Park “A Great Place to Grow  
State of the City Report March 12, 2014.***

***Fairview Park Mayor Eileen Ann Patton”***

Thank you Fairview Park Chamber of Commerce and Kevin Lynch from AT&T for hosting and sponsoring today’s event. I am very pleased to share with you our State of the City Report. I would like to acknowledge our outstanding staff at city hall. Our 101 full times employees are dedicated public servants with whom I am very proud to work.

I would also like to acknowledge others present today, including: Our City Directors, Chiefs and Staff, School Superintendent Brion Deitsch, County Councilman Dave Greenspan, School Board Members Joe Shucofsky and Katie Davis, City Councilman Bill Minek, Fairview Park Library Director Elaine Wilkinson, St. Joseph Academy student Halle Armstrong along with our Fairview Park businesses.

Many exciting events took place in 2013 and much was accomplished; even though we still faced a sluggish economy. The activities and events that occurred over this past year will benefit Fairview Park for many years to come.

In the past I have shared with you this administrations philosophy on city finance:

- Invest conservatively
- Stabilize and improve city finances
- Create reserves for future projects and unexpected expenditures.

The city administration works toward these goals every day of the year. We recognize as the economy is slowly recovering, we must still continue to weigh each and every expenditure carefully. I personally believe in creating reserves as these actions will keep us on the positive side if an unexpected expenditure arrives.

I am pleased to begin my report today with good news. Fairview Park ended the year in a positive financial position. We have money in the bank, we presented city council with a balanced budget, we have a good bond rating and we have a stable growing tax base.

This good news has allowed us to address a number of items that need attention. We are presently under discussion with our union employees, who have stood by us during these tough economic times and we have been working with our city engineer in addressing and adding more

sewer improvements city wide, benefiting the community as a whole. Equally important, after addressing these issues, we are also set to maintain a balance at the end of this fiscal year.

As our finance director, Lisa Rocco states: “Maintaining is the new UP.” As our 2013 General Fund income tax revenue maintained at \$4.9M. and property tax maintained at its current level of \$3M.

With the State of Ohio revoking the estate tax collection for all municipalities last year, the City in 2013 made efforts to compensate for this loss. We worked with an outside consultant to review and update our salary structure, we inventoried our road equipment and sold obsolete equipment, and we updated our current phone system that will decrease our annual cost. Most importantly, the city has worked with its employees and Cuyahoga County towards regionalization of healthcare for our employees. This will also result in a decrease in annual municipal expenses.

On January 22, 2014, the City received the “Financial Reporting Achievement Award” from the Government Finance Association of the United States and Canada for the year 2013. Congratulations to our Finance Department.

As income tax is our largest revenue source for the General Fund which funds salaries and allows for needed purchases from maintenance to emergencies, having a strong solid business community and a resourceful workforce located in our city is critical.

Recently, we hosted a recognition meeting for the largest workforces within our community. It was a wonderful event allowing us to acknowledge representative from the following companies:

Fairview Park School District – our largest employer  
Cleveland Metro Parks  
McGowan and Company  
Reserve Networks  
Target Corporation  
The Cleveland Clinic Foundation  
PEP  
West Side Cardiology  
Giant Eagle  
Fairview Eye Center

St. Angela Merici Church  
US Post Office  
Zaremba Management  
WXZ Development  
BFI Republic Waste  
Earth Fare Inc.  
Cuyahoga County Public Library  
Niederst Management  
The Cleveland Eye & Laser Surgery Center

Last month we also met with City Council in a work session on a Saturday to review our budget for this fiscal year. Each Director and Chief reviewed their budget items with City Council and discussed in detail, expenses for the coming year and the desired goals for each department. I

would like to thank City Council and the entire staff for their dedication in our obligation to deliver a balanced budget to Cuyahoga County by March 31<sup>st</sup> of this year.

Our Gemini Center, home of our recreation programs, celebrated its 6<sup>th</sup> birthday this January. The Gemini has truly become the heartbeat and focal gathering place of our community.

Last year we had over 7,000 members enrolled in our center with more than 4,000 children and 1,500 adults participating in our sports and leisure programs. Revenue collected at the Gemini from the previous year increased by over \$86,000. Contributing to this increase were the aquatics programs, adult fitness, membership, adult programs and conference and party room rentals.



Our Silver Sneakers exercise program has hit an all time high. In our first year we had 300 seniors enrolled. We are now pleased to offer this program to 1,578 seniors.

Major purchases included: reupholstering of equipment and chairs, refinishing of the gym and aerobic rooms, acid washing of the leisure and competition pool, lights in the competition pool, repair of pool drainage and gutter system, construction of a walkway between the Gemini and the library, installation of military flags at the entrance of the building and the new construction of the spinning room on the first level of the Gemini.

The Recreation Department also operates a park system with a total of 54.2 acres of playgrounds, ball diamonds, athletic fields, playing courts, and the high school football stadium. Last year, over 600 baseball/softball games and 200 soccer games were played at Bohlken Park, which is also the home of our Fairview Warriors Baseball Team.

In our city parks, trees were planted at Grannis and Morton, mulch was placed in every playground along with borders and rubber mats and the Bain Cabin wishing well roof was replaced. We also received a \$55,000 grant for new playground equipment for Morton Park which will be installed this year. The Gemini Center is self-funded and General Fund dollars are not used to operate this facility. This year, we will be implementing an upgraded maintenance plan as well as an enhancement plan, developed by Recreation Director Kenn Kaminski. This plan will address all five of our city parks with upgrades and new purchases.

I would like to acknowledge the entire Recreation staff for their dedication in keeping our Gemini Center beautiful, our programs exciting, our parks kid friendly and our fields well manicured for our sports teams.

Fun activities continue down the road at our Senior Center which is filled daily with active seniors who participate in the many vital services offered that help our seniors maintain their well being and independence. We are pleased to offer health programs, hot lunches, movies,

dances, music, art classes, book discussions, along with a transportation program for doctor's visits and grocery shopping offered to our seniors.

We continue to involve our Fairview students in our activities with the Senior Prom, our annual high school yard cleaning program and artwork made by the students.

We are also very pleased to receive three grants for our Thursday and Friday hot lunch meals, transportation program and nutrition education totaling over \$24 thousand dollars.

Our Senior Life Director Regina Sillasen and her full-loving dedicated staff encourage all seniors to stop in and meet new friends. Everyone is always welcome at our senior center!

Our Police Department has had many changes. Chief Patrick Nealon retired after 36 years of service with 23 years as our Chief. Chief Erich Upperman, a Fairview Park resident, was promoted and welcomed in as the new Chief.

Two new lieutenants and two new Sergeants were promoted and we welcomed three new police officers.

Our police department is switching to the MARCS radio system along with the Westshore Police agency. These new radios will increase officer's safety by providing clear and reliable radios to our personnel. The Chief worked with four other Westshore departments to secure twenty portable radios through grants, saving the city over \$60,000.

We purchased three new police cruisers, replacing three vehicles that were over eight years old. One of the cruisers is our city's first all-wheel drive police vehicle which proved to be an asset during these recent heavy snow storms. The department also purchased four new patrol rifles to be placed in the cruisers.

The Police Department oversees 18 dedicated school guards and our auxiliary police force who have performed over 2,700 hours of volunteer service. We are very pleased to honor Police Lt. John Martin as he was recognized by Mothers Against Drunk Drivers.

Our Fire Department had the busiest year in the history of the department regarding call volume. Over 1,500 medic calls, 201 miscellaneous calls for service and 126 fire related calls, including five significant structure fires, for a total of 1,917 calls; 220 more than the previous year.

Last year, we purchased a much needed road rescue ambulance, and a 15-year old vehicle was replaced with a Ford 250 utility truck through a state cost of \$25,501.

Our Fire Department oversees our residential senior lock box program. Thirty-five security boxes were installed last year with total participation now at 183 senior homes. The total cost to

our seniors is \$25.00 for the lock box which is located on the outside of the home and installed by our firefighters. This allows fire personnel to enter homes under emergency conditions.

The Department received grants offered through a variety of venues. Over \$26,000 was received for the purchase of two Power Pro Ambulance Cots through a Workers' Compensation Safety Program. Along with grants to purchase medical equipment for the paramedic units, two iPads for patient care reporting, an AED for Bain Cabin, six portable radios and one mobile radio. Special thanks to our Fairview Park Junior Women's Club for their donation to be used for equipment for our firefighters.

A special acknowledgment to Chief Williams who administered the reimbursement process with FEMA and recovered \$40,821 in expenditures related to Hurricane Sandy. The department was also reimbursed \$4,139 from Cuyahoga County for HAZ Mat and technical rescue training.

*Farewell* The Fairview Park Fire Department had no retirements in 2013; however, Fire Chief Bud Williams has announced his retirement at the end of April of this year. It has been an honor to work side by side with the Chief and he will truly be missed by all. After thirty-one years of service to the residents of our fine city, we are all very sad to see him go and we all wish him good times ahead! Our Civil Service Commission has completed testing, and we congratulate Captain Tony Raffin who will be promoted to the Chief's position in April. Please join me in wishing Chief Williams a happy retirement.

The City of Fairview Park maintains a full-time Service Department to serve the residents and commerce of the city. In July of last year we welcomed Rob Berner as the new Director.

Last year, the Service Department participated in capital improvement projects for a variety of city improvements. The City awarded a contract for water main replacement on Morton, Glenbar, Haber, Sycamore and West 224<sup>th</sup> Street. The City also entered into a contract for road repair on West 226<sup>th</sup> Street and Henry Road in addition to crack sealing on various streets in the city. A New City Hall Roof was also installed in 2013.

Last November, the City renewed its capital street improvement levy with the voters continuing the quarter percent income tax levy. Thank you to the residents for supporting this important program, now in its 25<sup>th</sup> year. The city administration worked with Republic Services, to change trash collection to Monday only pick-up. This new Monday pickup was widely appreciated by our residents.

In 2013, the Service Department maintained 52 miles of streets using 88 tons of asphalt, concrete and cold patch. The department serviced signal lights and repaired street signs, painted crosswalks and lane markings, repaired 33 water main breaks, pruned 179 city trees and planted 54 new trees.

In our continuing important attention to sewer maintenance, our Service Department cleaned over 30,000 feet of sewers, maintained and repaired two sanitary pumping stations, made 199 service calls to private residences in locating tees and investigating lines and they rebuilt 42 catch basins.

The City also made capital investments in our sewer collection system. Sewer repairs for 2013 included nine areas throughout the city along with lateral sewer grouting at seven locations for a total cost of over \$409,000.

Our Residential Outreach Program is a community service offered to our residents the first Monday of each month. Last year, our Service Department collected over seven tons of household hazardous waste and 6,000 pounds of computers. During our two shredding days in fall and spring, we collected over 14,000 pounds of paper. Thank you to our residents for participating and supporting our recycling programs.

A special thanks to our Service Department for their many hours of snow plowing and street clearing during this unbelievable winter season. It seems to be a daily task here in Northeast Ohio!



The administration, directors and chiefs work diligently throughout the year to secure grants made available to local communities. In addition to grants listed in department reports, we are very pleased to announce that the City of Fairview Park also received \$165,130.34 in grants for the following projects:

- Resurfacing of wood chips at Bohlken Park playground
- Western Lorain Road Streetscape Project
- Two shredding days in spring and fall, new recycling containers for our city parks and the Gemini Center.
- New hydraulic pole driver and retractor for our Service Department.

Thank you to Development Administrator Matt Hrubey for his diligence in seeking and preparing grants for our community.

In 2013, our Building Department was evaluated by the ISO (Insurance Service Office, Inc.) and received an upgraded rating. These results are directly related to the professionalism of the entire staff, congratulations.

Fairview Park residents are eligible for the Cuyahoga HELP Program. This program enables homeowners to borrow money to repair or remodel their homes at interest rates 3% below the market rate for home improvements. Eight loans were issued last year for a total of over \$132,000.00 worth of improvements. Two hundred eighty loans have been received by homeowners since the beginning of this program.

Last year, the Building Department issued a total of 1,422 permits. These fees amounted to over \$290,000; an increase of over \$77 thousand dollars more than the previous year. This small staff also conducted 1,908 field inspections last year.

Our Apartment License Program that we initialed has been successful with over 87 inspections taking place last year for a total of over \$21,000.00. Our rental home registration and inspection program also has been successful. We currently have 294 rental homes registered in our city and a total of \$31,100 was collected under this program.



Our seasonal residential property maintenance program involved 992 homes being inspected city wide. We are very pleased to offer this service to our community as it preserves maintenance standards in our residential neighborhoods.

The Development Department, under the direction of Service and Development Director Rob Berner, meets with businesses, both new and potential to gauge the business climate and develop strategies to help grow the city's tax base. The following businesses opened up in 2013: North Coast Credit Union, Enchantress Long Hair Salon, Total Nutrition Shop, James Pier Company, Inc., Jersey Mike's Subs, Dress Barn, Salon Lofts, Oshkosh B'Gosh and Brown Fox Florist. We had four businesses expand in their present location including: Target, O.R. Colin and Associates, Journey Church and Frickaccio's, while two businesses relocated to other sites in Fairview Park including, New Hope Church and the Fairview Park Hunger Center and Burke School of Irish Dance.

The Development Department continues working with a number of new projects for development. Garnett Health Campus nursing home facility broke ground in 2013 and is scheduled for completion in late summer of this year.

The former Vetrovsky Funeral Home land was purchased by Abode Lifestyle Living and is finalizing plans for 34 urban lofts overlooking the Metro Parks. This will be one of the first new residential developments in the city in the last ten years.

The vacant Pizza Hut building on Center Ridge was razed and new construction is underway for the Mattress Firm Company.



In 2013, we were approached by the owners of McDonalds as they worked with the City and local property owners to relocate the store within Fairview Park. A site plan was developed and an agreement was reached toward the end of 2013 with Lamar Properties to relocate to the Fairview Shopping Centre. This month, McDonalds will be at the Board of Zoning and Appeals and the City's Planning Commission presenting plans and signage design. It is anticipated the new McDonalds will be built and opened this year.

The Development Department has been busy making plans to improve west Lorain Road to make it more inviting for business growth. Due to the efforts of the administration, the True North Corporation decided to donate to the City its former vacant gas station site at the intersection of Lorain and West 227th. In this same area we were awarded a Local Transportation Improvement Project Grant and we will be developing the engineering and design for new crosswalks, street parking patterns and sidewalk improvements.

The Director and I have also continued working with the new owners of the former NASA buildings on Brookpark Road to secure easements from the City of Cleveland for use of electric poles on the north side of the property. We have also participated in meeting with the NASA Director and CEI in requesting an extension with NASA Glenn to continue the power supply to the buildings until all electrical issues are resolved. Realizing the importance of these buildings, we will continue to be hands on involved in this project and we remain optimistic new tenants will be in one or both of these buildings this year.

We are very excited as we look forward to an active year in the Development Department. We have had strong interest recently from a number of businesses and developers looking to make solid investments throughout our city, so stay tuned for some exciting news this year.



This year the City of Fairview Park turns 104 years old. I wonder what those 300 citizens who first lived here in 1910, would think if they could see their community now?

What started out as a small rural countryside town due to nonexistent roads and the beautiful valley on our borders, becoming a postwar community ... to the growing community we are today with excellent city services, an outstanding school district, a welcoming library, beautiful tree-lined neighborhoods, state of the art recreation center, friendly parks and commercial and retail options for all our citizens.

I think they would agree that Fairview Park "Is a Great Place to Grow."

In conclusion, I would like to send a very special thank you to our school superintendent Brion Deitsch. Brion has attended all of my State of the City Reports with full enthusiasm as I have attended all his State of the Schools with equal enthusiasm!

We support each other due to the great respect we have for each other. I am a true believer that “As the schools go... so goes the city.” Brion and I teamed up to make this the best city and best school district possible. It has been an honor to work with you. You will be missed but you will always be remembered for your commitment to the students of this community. You gave them opportunity, you gave them technology, and you shared your love of education with them. And that is a gift that will last a lifetime. Thank you Brion, and enjoy your retirement!

Thank you again to the Fairview Park Chamber of Commerce for continuing this great tradition in hosting the State of the City Report. I wish everyone a successful year ahead.

Mayor Eileen Ann Patton  
March 12, 2014