

2014 State of the City Address

Welcome and Thank You for taking interest in the State of Garfield Heights.

As you know we have weathered some tough financial times since I first took office four years ago, but I am happy to announce that during 2013 we were released from Fiscal Emergency. State Auditor Dave Yost came to Garfield Heights in September and made it official and it was a very proud day for us all.

During 2013, we saw signs of economic improvement here in our city as well.

- OverDrive is completely moved into its new world headquarters on Granger Road.
- Marymount Hospital completed its expansion projects and continues to be one of our city's largest employers providing a variety of support to our community.

We also celebrated the openings of numerous businesses including

- An environmentally friendly McDonald's at Garfield Commons
- Dollar Tree at Garfield Commons
- Family Dollar on Turney Road
- ThirdFederal Savings and Loan at Garfield Commons
- Save A Lot on Turney Road
- Dunkin' Donuts on Turney Road (and soon a Mr. Hero next door)
- The expansion of First Federal of Lakewood at Garfield Commons
- And on Monday the opening of Curves on Turney Road

The fact that business owners are investing in our city is a very good sign that the economic climate is improving.

We also celebrated the Grand Opening of the new Garfield Heights branch of the Cuyahoga County Library paid for by the library system's capital improvement fund. If you have not visited our library, please do so. I know you will be impressed. We are grateful for the library system's commitment to our community. Having a library branch here is truly an asset.

We were able to add new police and firefighters to our safety forces and we now have three K-9 units thanks to the support of our businesses and the individuals in our community who donated money for the dogs and their training.

There also is a School Resource Officer full-time now at Garfield Heights High School and we offered a summer Safety Town for preschoolers for the first time in many years.

With a grant from the federal government that was approved by Cuyahoga County, four of our city playgrounds were improved last summer.

Eagle Scout Michael Mahoney coordinated the renovation of the Safety Forces Memorial at the Civic Center with the help of our dedicated Green Up volunteers. Volunteerism is alive and well in Garfield Heights and we are grateful for the efforts of these hardworking people who simply want our community to be a great place to work and live.

We continue to provide services to help people in our community in need. During 2013 we expanded our Food Bank program to include evening hours each month. We also are expanding our Court Community Service and Juvenile Diversion programs. And this summer, we are going to have a pilot Boys and Girls Club program at Garfield Middle School. The Boys and Girls Clubs offer structured, positive programs for youth and we hope to expand this program in the future if our pilot is successful.

During 2014, they will begin the water line construction on Turney Road with paving expected the following year.

You also will see road improvements at Granger and Transportation boulevards in preparation for what we hope is going to be the exciting development by Craig Realty.

We are talking with a government agency that may occupy 10,000 square feet at City View and a Hotel chain interested in space at Antenucci and Transportation Boulevard.

We certainly are not out of the woods when it comes to finances, but as I begin my second term as your mayor, I am more optimistic about the future than ever before.

Thank you for your continued support of our community. My door is always open to you.