



May 12, 2014



Welcome to the
May 2014 Cuyahoga
County E-Newsletter

Dear Friend,

I hope you and your family are well and enjoying the month of May. As we prepare for the start of summer in a few weeks, I wanted to share with you a few things that I've been working on here in Cuyahoga County.

Dazzle the District

As you may know, my administration has focused on investing in projects that will create good-paying jobs rebuilding downtown Cleveland. In fact, Cuyahoga County is the only county today that dedicates 100% of our casino revenue to support economic development, including almost \$10 million that we've provided for the City of Cleveland in the last few years.

[That's why I was honored to join with community leaders last week for the formal unveiling of the world's largest outdoor chandelier.](#) We were delighted to provide \$3.6 million for this project to help revitalize Playhouse Square – the 2nd largest theater district in the county and Cleveland's biggest cultural attraction. I'm looking forward to working further with our partners in the community to make smart investments like this one that will strengthen Northeast Ohio's tourism industry and create good-paying jobs for middle class Ohioans.

Convention Center Hotel Groundbreaking

Last month marked the [official groundbreaking](#) of the new Cleveland convention center hotel that will be managed by Hilton Hotels & Resorts. When it's completed, this project will be the largest hotel in Cleveland, with 28 stories and 600 guest rooms, as well as ballrooms, meeting space, retail space, and a rooftop bar. The start of this construction project marks another step forward in the story of Cleveland's renaissance, and I am especially proud that it will create thousands of new jobs for hardworking families in our region.

This hotel will connect directly to the new Cleveland Convention Center and the Global Center for Health Innovation, and will ensure that Cleveland is well-positioned to compete directly against other cities for tourism and convention business in the years ahead. [Click here](#) to see a few photos from this important event.

Heroin Task Force

Like many communities across our nation, Cuyahoga County has seen a sharp increase in heroin-related deaths over the past few years. In September 2012, we formed the Cuyahoga County Heroin Initiative to coordinate countywide efforts to raise awareness regarding the toll of this epidemic through medical and law enforcement partnerships. We've taken several proactive measures to curb the crisis of heroin addiction, including implementing a prescription drug drop box and making the antidote naloxone available to help reverse the effects of overdose.

So far this year, we've seen the lowest fatality rate for the first quarter of a year since 2011. While this preliminary news is encouraging, we know that we can't afford to be complacent. There's a lot of work left to be done, but I'm confident in the team we've assembled, including U.S. Attorney Steven Dettelbach, Cleveland Chief of Police Calvin Williams, and Cuyahoga County Medical Examiner Dr. Thomas Gilson. [Click here](#) to learn more about the work we're doing to fight heroin abuse in Cuyahoga County.

Missing Persons Initiative

Last year, Cuyahoga County launched a [Missing Persons Initiative](#) to better coordinate efforts between law enforcement agencies in Northeast Ohio. Since then, we've hired a full-time Missing Persons Liaison and entered more than 500 cases into our new countywide database.

Later this month, on May 25th, we're going to hold a free event to mark the first annual Cuyahoga County Missing Persons Day. This event will be held at the Old Courthouse, 1 West Lakeside Avenue in Cleveland. At this free event, families affected by the unexplained disappearance of loved ones will be able to submit DNA and online profiles for law enforcement. In addition, community organizations and law enforcement officers will be on hand to provide information, collect tips on old cases, and conduct interviews regarding new cases. If you'd like more information or to RSVP for this event, email our Missing Persons Liaison, Tanisha Knighton, at tknighton@cuyahogacounty.us.

Removing Blight

One of the biggest challenges facing communities throughout Northeast Ohio today is the problem of vacant or abandoned homes that act as magnets for crime and place a serious economic strain on a community. Last month, I joined Thriving Communities Institute Director Jim Rokakis, Vacant and Abandoned Property Action Council (VAPAC) Chair Frank Ford, and Cuyahoga County Prosecutor Tim McGinty to announce new legislation I've introduced to County Council to establish a \$50 million fund to support the demolition of blighted structures.

It's critical that we take immediate action to address this problem in our communities. My administration has already convened discussions with each city in the county to hear their recommendations, and I'm looking forward to working with the members of our County Council to pass this proposal into law. [Click here](#) to read this legislation for yourself and then visit my Facebook page to share your thoughts with me. As always, my office is here to serve you. If you have any questions regarding the services we can provide, please call (216) 443-7178 or send me an email using the webform at <http://executive.cuyahogacounty.us/en-US/Contact.aspx>.

Thank you for all you do,

Ed FitzGerald

Cuyahoga County Executive

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