

Porsche of the Village eyes 10 years in Columbia Township



A decade ago, Columbia Township was concerned when the IGA and Walgreens businesses closed and their buildings became vacant. Cincinnati businessman Bill Woeste saw an opportunity to invest on this site in Madison Place, took the risk, and went to work transforming it.

Ten years later, the state-of-the-art, award-winning Porsche of the Village sells the most desired cars in the world. What started out as an empty building now serves as a thriving auto dealership both benefiting the tax base and involving itself in the community.

"In those early days of the project we found a willing partner in Columbia Township that helped us get off and running," said Jim Woodall, vice president

of The Beechmont Automotive Group. "We have been fortunate to have close relationships with not only the township government, but with the neighborhood that surrounds our dealerships as well."

Trustee President David Kubicki praises the business as a staple of the community. "They have thrown open their doors to show appreciation for the partnership that has been forged over the years by hosting civic and philanthropic events. They have also stepped up to sponsor the last two major events for the township," he said. "They jumped at the chance to help make our events a success. Passion like that is the gold standard," he said.

"Bill Woeste and his dealership have been a valued stakeholder in the

community for over a decade. They are one of our highest taxpayers, do exceptional philanthropic work in the community, and never display any hesitation when it comes to working with the township on any issue," said Township Administrator Mike Lemon.

"Ten years ago that site was nothing. Now it stands as a testament to hard work and cooperation," said Kubicki. "It's a formula that I hope to see repeated time and again. We will always welcome businesses like them to Columbia Township."

Trustee Susan Hughes noted, "Porsche of the Village doesn't just run their business here—they're a vital part of Columbia Township!"

Township's Aggregation Programs Could Save You Money

You benefit when your purchase joins in with others to create larger savings

If saving money on energy services is something that piques your curiosity, why not check out the township's electric aggregation program which allows residents and small businesses the opportunity to reduce their monthly bill?

Since 2012, Columbia Township has negotiated its electric supply for township residents and small businesses in an electric aggregation program. Township Administrator Mike Lemon said the program has been successful in the lowering the bills of many residents, and in fact enjoys lowest rate in Duke's service area.

"We would love to see more residents take advantage of these significant savings," Lemon said.

"In 2017, we had an average of 821 residences over the year that saved an average of \$78.08 for the year and we had an average of 636 residences for gas that averaged a savings of \$28.20 for the year. By joining our aggregation programs, at no cost, residents can save over \$100 per year on their utility costs," Lemon said.

Even if you opted out at the beginning of the program several years ago, you can enter back into the program at no cost, Lemon said.

To become a member, contact Interstate Gas Supply at 800-280-4474. If you have any questions or concerns, contact the township at 561-6046 or call the township's consultant, Eagle Energy at 251-7283. There is no risk to you to join.



Gas aggregation program also reduces your bill

Want to save money on your natural gas bill? Columbia Township has a variable rate gas aggregation program which can reduce gas costs through Constellation Supply. Contact Constellation at 800-492-6869 and mention the Columbia Township aggregation program to get your savings started.



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Free Compost Delivery Set for May 7 and August 6 Only
Two more chances to have these recycled products delivered to your door



If you've enjoyed the convenience of having free wood chips and compost from the township delivered to your door, take note. This year the township has altered its policy and is setting up appointments for delivery.

Remaining dates are Monday, May 7, or Monday, August 6, for the service, which is only available to township residents. To request a delivery, call 561-6046. You will be called before delivery to verify your request.

Important Phone Numbers in Columbia Township



Trustee President
David Kubicki
272-7870
dkubicki@columbiatwp.org



Trustee Vice-President
Chris Kritikos
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Trustee
Susan Hughes
272-7872
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Fiscal Officer
Caroline Heekin
272-7867
cheekin@columbiatwp.org

Township Administration

Administrator
C. Michael Lemon
561-6046
MLemon@columbiatwp.org

Administrative Assistant
Kimberly Gray
272-7877
Kgray@columbiatwp.org

JEDZ Tax Administrator
Jane Fette
272-9954
JFette@fairfaxoh.org

Property Maintenance Code Enforcement
792-7256
columbia@sycamoretownship.org

POLICE PROTECTION—Emergency- 911

Columbia Township—Non-Emergency
825-2280

City of Cincinnati—Non-Emergency
765-1212
www.cincinnati-oh.gov/cpd

Hamilton County—Non-Emergency
825-1500 www.hcso.org

FIRE PROTECTION—Emergency- 911

The Little Miami Joint Fire & Rescue District
271-3636
Station 1 Wooster Pike
271-3636
http://lmfr.org
Station 2 Wiehe Road
531-2022
http://lmfr.org

Deer Park—Silverton Joint Fire District
791-2500
www.dpsjfd.org

the Voice

SPRING 2018

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Township on Fast Track Toward Phase One of Bike Trail Extension with \$100,000 Donation

Little Miami Scenic Trail Plan Options May Be Evaluated This Summer



Columbia Township has stepped up to focus attention on the construction of the 1.6-mile extension of the Little Miami Trail that will run through the Wooster Pike Business District.

The township has been collaborating with Great Parks of Hamilton County to move this project ahead for several years. Beginning at Newtown Road, the proposed path is planned to be extended in Phase 1 along the river to an easement leading to Wooster Pike to a new pedestrian crossing planned at the intersection of Wooster and Ashley Oaks. This effort will be undertaken pending review and approval by various regulatory agencies.

The Phase 2 portion will be extended farther along the Little Miami River behind Kroger's and emerge by Miami Run (by McDonald's), travel up the hill along a path by Wooster, and end at the Mariemont Branch Library.

Great Parks owns a swath of property from the Little Miami River to an area behind the Columbia Township Kroger store that will be used for a major portion of the trail. The uncertain portion of the pathway that is under review would be the path up the hill by McDonald's and along Wooster to the library, according to Administrator Mike Lemon. There are several alternative paths being considered for the second phase, he said.

Lemon noted that Columbia Township Trustees are very interested in doing what they can to get the project going, and quickly. To that end, they pledged \$100,000 to "expedite the extension" with a goal of trying to get the Phase 1 the extension "done this summer or fall to spur on further development of the path," Lemon said.

"Our goal is to extend the bike path and grow the interest to redevelop the area along it sooner rather than later," said Lemon. "We want to get this project going, see results, and leverage it to finish the path."

Trustees also pledged another \$100,000 that will come later after the first phase is complete.

According to Great Parks Director Jack Sutton, the park district is starting its meetings with stakeholders along the proposed pathway soon. After all stakeholders are contacted, a public meeting on possible plans will be scheduled. After a preferred alignment is identified, Great Parks will provide a final report with probable construction costs.

Trustee Vice President Susan Hughes said she's fielding lots of questions about the bike trail extension and hopes that plans can be formulated soon. "This is an exciting project for our community and I am sure it will be a very popular pathway for our residents to use," she said.

I'm Prouder Than Ever of Our Community

Truly believe, to the very bottom of my heart, that we live in one of the best communities in this country. For me, I have been fortunate enough to live in Columbia Township for 62 years—my entire life. It has been my honor to serve the township as a trustee for over 20 years, and in that time, I have only grown prouder of the place we all call home.

There has been a high level of energy accompanied by great focus from the current Board of Trustees when it comes to improving the township. I can say with confidence that the team we have in place at the township level right now is the most active that I have ever seen in my time serving in our local government. This dedication to making our community a better place to raise a family and grow a business continue to improve the quality of life for all our residents.

However, there is one ingredient that truly makes us a great place to live—you. I speak from experience when I say that the residents of Columbia Township are the ones that inject life into all our neighborhoods.



Community spirit is growing in Columbia Township with the addition of new community events, like the St. Patrick's Day celebration in March.

It is my request that you continue to help us in improving and growing together. It is my hope that we see volunteer initiatives from our residents to help us in enhancing the image and the beautification process of Columbia Township. This includes assisting with implementing signage and landscaping activities throughout all neighborhoods.

Beyond this type of volunteer work, we have been so fortunate to have dedicated

residents assist with some of our big events, like our hugely successful St. Patrick's Day block party in March. With more events on the horizon in the coming months, we will need your passion once again to make them a success.

Thank you for all the hard work that you put in to make our township what it is. I look forward for what the rest of 2018 holds for our community.

Township Focused on Improving Streets

Road Assessment Program Helps Protect Investment in Township's Street Inventory

Perhaps nothing draws more social media comment or general community grouching than when a street falls into disrepair. Potholes and rough roads are a daily reminder that communities must pay attention to the streets that they own, and if they don't, residents notice.

To protect its investment in its street inventory, Columbia Township engages every few years in a process designed to assess the condition of its 10.4 miles of township roads.

An engineer from an outside company is contracted to systematically categorize all roads as either Good, Fair, Poor or Very Poor. As part of the assessment, the length, width, curb, pavement surface, drainage,

and sidewalk are each evaluated and graded. That's so when funds become available for repairs or reconstruction, the township will have a clear picture what roads are in the most vulnerable condition and the estimated cost to bring them into good condition.

"One thing I like about this process is the objectivity used to assess streets," said Township Administrator Mike Lemon. "This process not only gives us the opportunity for better planning and budgeting, but also helps everyone realize the need to focus on continual repair and improvement of our streets," said Lemon.

"The evaluation process is used to help prioritize future repairs based on this assessment and factors such as

total cost and grant money available," said John Servizzi, road superintendent.

In recent years, the township has invested in upgrading Monning, Lucille, Edith, Blaney, Roe, Ridge Circle, Ridgewood and many others

"While everyone seems to gravitate to what streets are being reconstructed, our Road Department maintains a year-round program of pot hole repairs, full-depth repairs, curb repairs, drainage repairs, catch-basin repairs and other street needs. We try to stay on top of street conditions," said Servizzi.

In the next year, trustees will consider upgrades to Maphet, Ebersole, Lucille and Murray, depending on money available and costs.

New Mass County Alert System Puts You in Charge of Emergency Notifications

Choose from more than 40 options in free program

Want to receive real-time emergency notifications regarding local events and situations? Hamilton County has created a new way for residents to stay on top of important news, urgent situations or critical community alerts via the medium of your choice.

The new program rolled out this spring by the Hamilton County Emergency Management & Homeland Security Agency allows residents to quickly learn about tornado warnings, storm watches, civil emergencies and more. Here are details about the program and information regarding how to sign up:

What is Alert Hamilton County?

Alert Hamilton County, or "Alert HC," is a mass notification and warning system used to alert residents about emergencies, severe weather, and other important community news in jurisdictions throughout Hamilton County. Alert HC messages send emergency information, like where to go, what to do and how to stay informed during an emergency, directly to residents via text message, email, and voice call.

When will it be used?

Alert Hamilton County will be used to send emergency notifications when there are imminent threats to life, health and safety for residents in Hamilton County. You will only receive non-emergency notifications for the topics you opt-into in your user profile.

What are some of the features of Alert Hamilton County?

Alert Hamilton County is customizable and allows you to choose from over 40 emergency and community notifications you may want to receive. Alert HC also allows you to decide how you want to receive alerts (via text, email, or voice call).



How can I sign up?

1. Go to www.alerthc.org to register for Alert Hamilton County.
2. Enter personal information (name, address, contact information).
3. Select the alerts of your choice.
4. Fill out a secure "Safety Profile" that will allow 911 operators to relay important information to first responders when you call 911 during an emergency.



Save the Date! (Guarda la fecha!)



Keep your evening open for fun with a Mexican flair in a new Columbia Township-sponsored Cinco de Mayo celebration scheduled from 5-10 p.m. on Saturday, May 5, at the Mariemont Promenade, 7229 Wooster Pike.

My Girl Friday provides the entertainment, while food trucks, street corn, piñatas and a big screen (to watch the Kentucky Derby) round out the events. For more information, check out the township's website at ColumbiaTwp.org.

Township to Implement State-of-the-Art Patrol Car from Sheriff's Office for Community Use

"Cleaner" vehicle reduces fuel consumption, maintains power needed for pursuit-related emergencies

With an eye on a future which indicates the decline of fossil-fueled vehicles is on the horizon, Columbia Township is leading the way this year in its purchase of a hybrid patrol car, the Police Responder Hybrid Sedan by Ford.



Although the township contracts its police services with the Hamilton County Sheriff's Office, it is responsible to purchase the vehicles used by deputies.

Usually public agencies have tended to exclude emergency response vehicles from any changes that would need to take place due to rules to reduce greenhouse gases or to purchase "greener" vehicles. The concept was that most hybrids would not have the necessary power standards for police work.

However, Administrator Mike Lemon said he was interested in positioning the township for future changes as "more and more auto manufacturers are converting to electric as their primary source of power within the next 10 years."

"These hybrids are green, environmentally friendlier and we need to be looking ahead and be thinking about the transitions that are coming up in the world of gas-powered vehicles," he said.

"We want to put our toe in the water by buying this hybrid vehicle and seeing how well it performs."

Hybrids provide better mile-per-gallon statistics and also more fuel-efficient idling. According to information from Ford, the vehicle can save 1,550 gallons of gasoline per year, along with fewer fill-ups and thus less down-time for deputies.

Trustee President David Kubicki said the Ford hybrid vehicle was calibrated for police, not set up like a retail vehicle. With the engines working together, there will be time when both gas and electric are running together, and then during idling fuel is saved in the electric mode, he noted.

"This is a win-win for Columbia Township," Lemon said. "We will be transitioning to the way the future will view transportation, as well as saving costs overall. And we're making a positive environmental impact, as well."

First Township-Sponsored St. Patrick's Day Block Party Draws a Big Crowd

Organizers of the first Columbia Township St. Patrick's Day Block Party believe their effort was a huge success, based on the 1,000 residents who came out to enjoy the festivities on a cold March day.

Columbia Township partnered with 50 West Brewing Company, Volvo Cars Cincinnati East and the organization Connect Cincy to host the event and raise funds to be used to complete an extension of the Little Miami Bike Trail.

"Hosting events like the one we did for St. Patty's Day is special for our township," Trustee Chris Kritikos said. "Bringing people together as a community helps us grow together in a way that can't be quantified."

"Having a full band of bagpipers walking up the street on St. Patrick's Day made it really special. I could see how

much the crowd loved this event," said Trustee Vice President Susan Hughes.

Administrator Mike Lemon said he hopes the celebration spurs on further township events. "Our guys worked hard to help make this happen. It takes a lot of preparation to have the streets close down and 30 minutes later you have everything set up with 1,000 people in attendance," he said. "Road Superintendent John Servizzi and his team deserve a lot of credit. And this Board of Trustees want to see this community be a fun and exciting place to live. The possibilities of what we can do are endless."

Trustees promise more events are on the horizon! Visit the township's newly renovated Facebook page (Columbia Township) for event updates and news about the township.

