



# Call The Roll

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## Council Joins Mayor, Neighborhood Leaders in Crime Prevention Assault

Mayor Michael B. Coleman and City Councilmember Michael C. Mentel have formed the Neighborhood Safety Working Group. Chaired by Capital University Law Professor Kent Markus, the group will develop crime suppression and prevention tactics by using a strategic, data-driven problem-solving process.



"This crime-fighting model has been tested and proven in dozens of cities and is becoming a national best practice," said Professor Markus. "We are taking successes from around the country, from successes in

**Council Safety Committee Chairman Michael Mentel and Clarence Lumpkin of the South Linden Area Commission discuss their plans as members of the city's new Safety Working Group**

cities like New York and Boston, and bringing those innovations to Columbus."

The Safety Group includes law enforcement, government agencies, non-profit leaders and neighborhood members. It will work to identify the specific nature, location and demographics of offenders and/or specific types of crime and develop strategies to prevent crime and more quickly apprehend offenders.

Law enforcement members include the U.S. Attorney and Franklin County Prosecutor along with Columbus Police and representatives from the Courts and the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction.

Other partners of the Safety Team include non-profit organizations, agencies and community leaders with expertise in safety, such as United Way,

Columbus Public Schools, the Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Board of Franklin County, and citizens from neighborhoods throughout Columbus.

"We will work together to make every Columbus neighborhood safe. Collaborating with community leaders and crime-fighting experts will help us devise long-term solutions that will lead to significant improvements in neighborhood safety," said Councilmember Michael C. Mentel, chairman of Council's Safety Committee.

The group will also work with city departments to develop the Neighborhood Safety Academy curriculum. The Academy will focus on teaching practical skills that any citizen can learn to enhance the safety of their neighborhood.

## Collaborative Effort to Protect a Scenic River Gets a Boost

Protecting Big Darby Creek is a key priority of Columbus City Council. The Big Darby is central Ohio's only national and state scenic river, and one of the most diverse ecological treasures in the United States.

The Big Darby does not run through Columbus, but



**Councilmembers Matt Habash and Patsy Thomas join Col. John Riverburgh, Commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Huntington District, and Karen Miller of the Corps at the announcement of the grant to plan to improve Hellbranch Run.**

Hellbranch Run does. Hellbranch Run is one of the major tributaries to the Darby, and if pollution flows through its waters, the Darby is heavily impacted.

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## Collaborative Effort.....

Columbus has joined a collaborative to protect the water quality of the Hellbranch, and last month received a \$150,000 federal grant to guide the future of waterway protection for the area.

Officials from every governmental jurisdiction in the Hellbranch Run Watershed are part of the collaborative, which earned federal funding with the help of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Last year Council adopted some of the nation's toughest water protection standards for new developments in the Hellbranch area. Surrounding communities are expected to use it as a model to protect the Darby and other critical waterways in central Ohio.

Other government entities that are participating include: Franklin County Commission, Hilliard, Grove City, Brown Township, Norwich Township, Pleasant Township and Prairie Township.

## State-of-the-Art Police Academy Will Improve City Crime Fighting

When the current Columbus Police Academy opened nearly 40 years ago, the notion of police chasing identity thieves through cyber space was confined to the pages of science fiction novels. Today it is an everyday activity and Columbus police need to be prepared to battle crime



**FOP President Bill Capretta, left, joins Councilman Kevin L. Boyce, Police Chief James Jackson, Mayor Michael Coleman and Councilman Michael Mentel at the ground breaking of the new Police Academy**

in ways never imagined before. That is why the city broke ground on a new \$20 million Police Academy on North Hague Avenue. The 166,000 square-foot complex on 48 acres will include 10 training classrooms, an evidence room, computer labs, behavioral science rooms, a media resource center, gymnasium and 500-seat auditorium.

"We need the best-trained police force, one that understands and keeps pace with changes in criminal activity," said Council Safety Chairman Michael Mentel. "Today isn't about a building, it's about continuing to build the skills and expertise of our officers."

Council's Administration Committee Chairman Kevin L. Boyce said he was excited to see that not only is the city providing outstanding facilities for the police to receive training, but to also see the city use the latest energy efficiency techniques to cut operational costs. Boyce also noted the facility will be used to provide training to officers from other departments and the city will earn revenue for services it provides to other government agencies.

## Columbus Gets New View of Scioto River When North Bank Park Opens

Thanks to a generous **state grant**, downtown workers, visitors and residents can soon enjoy the Scioto River from a new city park.



**Council President Matt Habash welcomes the creation of a new riverfront park by the Arena District**

Council President Matt Habash and Mayor Michael B. Coleman joined community leaders to break ground on the first phase of the new downtown park system that will connect the

riverfront and rebuilt Town and Main Street Bridges.

The park, known as North Bank Park, is scheduled to be completed by the end of 2004 and will include pedestrian and bicycle access along the river. This will connect the park to the Scioto and Olentangy Trails to the north and Battelle, Civic Center and Bicentennial Park to the south. The site will also open up a view of the river for pedestrians and drivers on Long and Spring Streets. It will feature a new, interactive fountain for kids and a glass-enclosed pavilion that will overlook the downtown skyline.

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## Columbus Gets New View...

"In Central Ohio, our most impressive natural resources are our rivers. Featuring them as part of our reinvigorated downtown helps to make Columbus a place we're all proud to call home," said Council President Habash. "Our trails along the river banks already draw hundreds of downtown workers and residents each day, and this will surely be a great addition to our park system."

The median between Spring and Long Streets by Neil Avenue will also be incorporated into the park to provide a pedestrian corridor linking downtown with the rapidly developing Nationwide Arena District. Funding for the \$13.75 million park consists of \$8.75 million from the State of Ohio and \$5 million from the city.

## Multi-Generational Community Planned for City's Southeast Area

As economic development begins to boom in the southeast region of the city and neighboring Obetz, Columbus is providing more housing options to those who work in the area and retire. Councilmembers Charleta B. Tavares and Patsy Thomas helped break ground for the new Alum Creek Village, which will provide 230 new housing units in the coming years.

The development is receiving assistance from the Columbus/Franklin County Affordable Housing Trust. A



**Councilmembers Charleta B. Tavares and Patsy Thomas help break ground at the new Alum Creek Village neighborhood.**

**\$1 million loan will spark \$22 million in private investment at the site.** Alum Creek Village will feature 142 single families homes, 40

owner-occupied condos and 48 elderly apartments. Tavares told the crowd at the

groundbreaking that this multi-generational neighborhood will build a strong, diverse community and the city is excited about similar developments in the future.

## In the Spotlight: Sensenbrenner Addresses Smart Growth Issues



**Councilman Richard Sensenbrenner, left, hosts a packed house at the Columbus Metropolitan Club where Robert Liberty, who is completing a year in residence at Harvard Design School, outlined Smart Growth strategies for Central Ohio.**

## 2004 City Budget Process Update

The 2004 City budget process promises to be the most difficult in recent memory. This year alone, City Auditor Hugh Dorrian has reduced the general fund revenue estimate by more than \$13.5 million. Council has worked with the Mayor to close most of this gap and will consider further actions.

Like families and businesses throughout Columbus, city income has slumped in the face of a slow national and regional economies - income tax revenue growth have fallen to its lowest level in the last 40 years. With no increases in state aid and new costs for Homeland Security, the deficit continues to mount.

The fiscal pressures on Columbus are not unique. A recent survey by the National League of Cities found that 79% of American cities and towns are facing significant financial difficulties - even more than in 2002. Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, Dayton, New York, Boston, Austin, Chicago and Minneapolis all have resorted to or planned layoffs to help balance their budgets.

We want and will seek community input to make sure we prioritize and make the best decisions possible with the tough challenges that lie ahead. Your advice and guidance will be valued.