

AN EARLY CHRISTMAS PRESENT

While too big to fit under a tree, Holiday-like excitement was in the air at Broadleigh and Northtowne Elementary Schools earlier this month. Council member [Kevin Boyce](#) came by to cut the ribbon and unveil the first two completed projects guided by his Building Safe Playgrounds Initiative.

Even in nine-degree temperatures, neighborhood leaders, school children, teachers and parents wore warm smiles.

"Each of these areas represents a legacy for the entire neighborhood," said Boyce. "Children's Hospital treats more than 600 children every year for playground injuries," he continued. "To reduce injuries, to work against obesity and for healthier neighborhoods and to improve the quality of life for families -- those are our end goals." Children's Hospital, Columbus Public Schools, Kids-Ohio.org, the Columbus Recreation and Parks Department all are partners in the safe playgrounds effort. Boyce did not try the slide but did look longingly at the new climbing wall.



Boyce celebrates the new play area at Northtowne Elementary with students, teachers, parents and community leaders.

How Northtowne said thanks....

THANK YOU

When I heard of the new playground,
In my mind the world was going around,
I'm grateful we're getting a new playground.

When I first heard we were getting a new
playground,
I could only say "WOW!"
I never thought we would get a new playground
until now!

Getting a new playground means the world to you
and me.

To show an appreciation from Northtowne's point
of view,

All I can say about this is
THANK YOU!

By Dagmawe Berhanu

THANK YOU FOR OUR PLAYGROUND AND MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM NORTHTOWNE STUDENTS, FACULTY, AND STAFF

It's like Santa came early.
T'was the night before Christmas except this one's for you.

It was weeks before talking about closing our school
Everybody not knowing if it was true
The teachers in a room with lots of chatter
Trying to figure out just what was a matter
We looked out the window and saw you were there
We knew right away someone still cared
The swings, the climber and a place to play
Soon to be ready for us one day
The rain, the snow, it was so cold
But nothing seemed to put you on hold
The ground all frozen, hard as a rock
But you still worked around the clock
We'd like to say thank you for a job well done
Now we can't wait to have some fun!!!

By Trivon Coles

FIGHTING CAMPUS CRIME



Officers Fletcher Farr and George Smith patrol downtown Columbus and look forward to new equipment.

Help for students and neighbors living around the Ohio State University campus is on the way as Council set architects to work on a combined OSU/City policing center to be constructed on 11th Avenue. Located between Fourth and Summit streets, the center will enable officers to respond more quickly. The City and OSU are splitting the approximate \$3.0 to \$3.8 million cost. The center will be developed as a “green” facility and incorporate energy efficient technology and strategies. Fifty-six Columbus police officers will eventually work out of the center.

At 16,000 square feet, the center will also house a Community Crime Patrol office, highly trained civilians who supplement uniformed officer presence. The Campus area is one of four project areas patrolled by CCP.

Uniformed officers patrolling the neighborhood and elsewhere will also benefit from a measure sponsored by Council member [Michael C. Mentel](#), chair of the Safety

Committee. “Council continues to support police bike patrol operations,” said Mentel. “The bike patrol is one of the best ways to connect officers with neighborhood residents to understand how they can be most effective in fighting crime.” Council created a special fund in its 2005 budget amendments to target funds for specific public safety challenges and needs. In November, it used monies to replace the division’s entire fleet of fifty-four bikes.

CONTINUING TO IMPROVE CARDIAC ARREST SURVIVAL RATES

Look for a stepped-up local advertising campaign to spread the word about the importance of AEDs/CPR. According to the American Red Cross, nationally, 40,000 more lives could be saved if emergency response occurs within five minutes of cardiac arrest. Some cities across America have tripled their local survival rates. Council member [Patsy Thomas](#) hopes to do the same in Columbus with Project Second Chance. The six-month campaign includes National Public Radio spots (90.5 FM), half-page ads in *Business First* that run every two weeks, and a web-banner ad on the *Dispatch*’s business page. No tax dollars are involved.



And Ten Columbus Companies have become Corporate Champions. They are deploying AEDs in their workplace, funding employee CPR/AED training, and are donating an AED and training to a charitable organization in the community. If your company wants to participate, or needs information on CPR/AED training opportunities, simply call [645-8559](tel:645-8559) to sign up. And click on the link below to see editions of the Project Second Chance newsletter summarizing recent activities, and to learn more: www.columbuscitycouncil.org/secondchance

GIVING PEOPLE HOPE



Council member Charleta Tavares

City Council is raising the bar when it comes to the City’s commitment to provide assistance to seniors and low income families working for the American Dream of home ownership. Working with the administration, Council recently established a new Housing Preservation Fund within the City’s Capitol Improvement Budget (CIB). The fund was created to utilize the city’s bonding authority to fund housing construction, renovation and preservation projects.

Council member [Charleta B. Tavares](#), chair of Council’s Health, Housing and Human Services Committee, said the goal was to increase the available dollars to “protect our seniors and save our neighborhoods. We were looking at major cuts and a possible dismantling of the CDBG program by Congress this year. We wanted to ensure that we could first, hold the line and maintain what we have and secondly, create a local funding source to grow our program to serve more seniors and low-income residents regardless of the neighborhood in which they happened to live. This program will assist individual residents in maintaining their homes and preserving the quality of our neighborhoods by reducing potential blight.”

The Housing Preservation Fund will initially start with \$2 million, \$250,000 for Emergency Shelter Rehabilitation and \$1,750,000 for Home Safe and Sound program, Infill Housing Development, and Acquisition/Rehabilitation/Resale. The shelter repair program is being created to assist homeless shelters with major repairs and equipment needs in order to maintain the housing safety-net system. “This program provides another public/private partnership with our community-based non-profit organizations who serve our residents,” said Tavares. “With these resources we can ensure that our community residents are safe and that our capital construction investments are protected.”

The Home Safe and Sound program will be expanded to serve seniors and those on fixed incomes throughout the City. The existing program is currently funded with Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) dollars. The CDBG program criteria require that the dollars must serve low-income residents and designated census tracts which are generally within the central city neighborhoods.