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Good Leadership in Tough Times

As I sit here contemplating what the current economic crisis means for us here in Allentown, President Obama has been on the world-stage developing consensus on the steps needed to reinvigorate the global economy. We now live in a world where what happens here in America or in Germany or China does not stay within our own borders but affects everyone across the board. And cities like Allentown, that normally might not feel the brunt of such a crisis on a local level, are not immune to that reality.

For years, I am proud to say that my administration delivered balanced budgets that not only met expectations but exceeded them—in 2006, by \$5 million, and in 2007, by \$3.5 million—without tax increases

and despite the many problems we faced:

- We turned an \$8 million deficit we inherited from the previous administration into a multi-million dollar surplus, transforming a city drowning in red ink into the black.
- We inherited a negative bond rating that, in 2008, through strong fiscal management and budgetary practices, has recently been upgraded to a positive one by Standard & Poor's and Moody's Investor Services.

Yet, this year, for the first time since I became Mayor, the crumbling national economy has devastated city and state budgets across the United States, and we are predicting that our 2008 budget will have a revenue shortfall—my administration's first ever.

“Management's actions toward returning the city to structurally sound budgeting practices will continue to have a positive effect on Allentown's financial profile, which has improved significantly since 2006.”

—Jesse Brady, Standard & Poor's credit analyst

But, as you well know, the signature of good leadership is based on how well we plan during our times of plenty for the unexpected. Through debt restructuring, cost-cutting measures, economic development and growing revenues, my administration has created a cash reserve that will allow us to keep moving forward on those things that make our city strong—without sacrificing services or imposing more pain on our residents in the form of tax increases.

Despite what some would have you believe, no Mayor, no Governor, no President can handle these problems alone. Former President Woodrow Wilson once said, “I not only use all the brains that I have, but all that I can borrow”. So, in conjunction with City Council President Mike

D'Amore, we've gathered a Blue Ribbon Committee of well-respected and qualified individuals (for full member list visit www.allentownmayor.com) who will be tasked with, identifying additional new non-tax revenue, and looking at new ways to reduce costs. With their help and that of our City Finance Director, Larry Hilliard, I am confident, we will rebound from this setback and maintain the fiscal foundations we have worked so hard over the last several years to build.

As Allentownians, we have the will, the knowledge and the moral stewardship to steer Allentown through these hard times into a new period of prosperity. ■

Keeping Our City Safe

Pawlowski Administration Rebuilds Police Department, Finds New Tools to Fight Gangs and Violent Crime In Allentown



U.S. Attorney Laurie Magot and Mayor Ed Pawlowski

The crime rate is falling in Allentown at a rate much better than the national average thanks to a comprehensive approach initiated by the Pawlowski Administration to rebuild the police department and find new and innovative tools to combat gangs and the impact of the drug trade on city neighborhoods.

Mayor Ed Pawlowski and Police Chief Roger MacLean in February introduced three new police officers and pinned badges on seven recent police academy graduates during a ceremony in City Council chambers.

The new officers are part of the ongoing rebuilding process in the police department, which lost over a third of its force officers to early retirement starting at the end of 2005. Due to this rebuilding effort, the city now has 200 officers and is looking to increase the roster to 215 officers, which includes an additional 19 budgeted officers above and beyond those lost to retirement. Mayor Pawlowski said, "We've come a long way in a short period of time, hiring and training some 70 new officers in less than three years."

"We are confident that the new manpower will make a positive impact on increasing public safety across Allentown," said Chief MacLean.

According to the FBI's Preliminary Uniform Crime Report for 2007, violent crime in the city fell more than 19 percent from 2006 to 2007 while falling just 1.4 percent nationally during the same time period. Numbers for 2008 aren't yet available, but Mayor Pawlowski said the evidence shows the administration's crime-fighting efforts continue to have a positive effect in reducing crime.

The city is also collaborating with other law enforcement and related agencies in identifying and prosecuting gang members under the most punitive charges available based on state or federal laws. In December, through a combined effort by the Allentown Police, the U.S. Attorney's office, the FBI and the District Attorney, 23 arrests were made of members of the Latin Kings and Blood gangs, on numerous charges of drug trafficking and firearms offenses in and around Allentown.

The defendants were charged by the U.S. Attorney's office through the "222 Corridor Anti-Gang Initiative," a federally funded program designed to defeat some of the most pervasive and violent gangs in eastern Pennsylvania. Allentown is one of six cities participating in the unique program. This month Senator Bob Casey helped secure an additional \$200,000 in federal funds to prevent youth street gang activity and continue many of the programs started under this initiative for another year.

Over the past eight months, city and police administrators have also worked with the

Hanover Justice Group and Dr. George Kelling of the Rutgers Police Institute and author of the "Broken Windows" theory of community law enforcement, to develop new strategies to attack crime in Allentown. These strategies include new procedures and assignments that allow officers to patrol by district, giving them more opportunity to meet residents and business people, track crime trends and identify and resolve issues before they become law enforcement concerns.

The city has also taken a number of other initiatives to further reduce crime including the creation of new community bicycle patrols, the continued re-staffing of its investigations divisions, the formation of a new Anti-Gang unit and the installation of over seventy surveillance cameras throughout the city which are monitored 24/7 by the city's 911 communications center.

"New training procedures, new tools and new technology are making the men and women of our department more effective and efficient than ever," stated Mayor Pawlowski. "We are off to a good start, but we have a long way to go, it is my goal to make a much greater impact on reducing crime in this city," the Mayor said. "We are working daily toward that end with short range and long-range plans to make our communities and neighborhoods safe places to live work and raise our families." ■



Police swearing-in ceremony

ENHANCING YOUR QUALITY OF LIFE: Graffiti Busters

Recently, Mayor Ed Pawlowski announced the arrests of several individuals wanted for more than 200 separate incidents of graffiti tagging across the city. Those arrests send a clear message that graffiti is not a game, it is not art and it will not be tolerated in the City of Allentown. Working in conjunction with Lehigh Valley Crime Stoppers, Allentown will pay a reward of up to \$500 for information about graffiti vandals that leads to an arrest. Anonymous tips can be made to Crime Stoppers by calling 1-800-426-TIPS. Already, one such tip was instrumental in leading to an arrest.

Every resident of Allentown has a role to play in eliminating graffiti in our neighborhoods, by calling 911 immediately whenever you see graffiti in progress and then, making one more call to the Allentown Graffiti Busters Program at 610-437-8729 to request immediate clean-up, which is free to all property owners.

DID YOU KNOW:

The City of Allentown's New Neighborhood Improvement ordinance makes it illegal:

- for retailers to sell spray paint and wide tip markers to minors
- for minors to purchase spray paint and wide tip markers
- for adults to purchase spray paint for a minor
- for minors to possess spray paint and wide tip markers on any public property

If you would like to know more about Allentown's anti-graffiti programs, please call the Bureau of Recycling and Solid Waste, 610-437-8729. ■



Exide Plant Redevelopment Joins List of Business Successes in Allentown



New P & P Mill Lofts



Cosmopolitan Rendering



Cosmopolitan Restaurant
Under Construction

One of Allentown's largest automobile dealers and a major regional developer joined forces this year to create a new economic development initiative that restores a long-vacant brownfield site and creates an additional 50 quality jobs in the city.

In a move that demonstrates their confidence in the City of Allentown, Bennett Toyota and J.G. Petrucci Co. announced in March that they will rehabilitate the former Exide Battery plant at 2001 Lehigh Street.

Exide operated an automotive battery manufacturing plant and storage facility at the site for approximately 35 years before closing in 1989. The new project, from start to finish, carries a projected price tag of \$20 million.

"Bennett Toyota has been a valued member of the Allentown community for many years and we are delighted that they will be expanding their dealership to better serve customers throughout the Lehigh Valley," said Mayor Pawlowski.

J.G. Petrucci Company is providing Bennett with a complete design-build package for an environmentally responsible, Silver LEED-certified state-of-the-art facility, the first of its kind in Toyota's Central Atlantic Region. The site will be owned by Bennett Toyota.

"We are ecstatic to be part of the Lehigh Street Auto Mile," said Bennett. "We are proud to be working with J.G. Petrucci. We were looking for both green building and the construction of state-of-the-art automobile dealerships."

"This project offers a great example of the benefits that can be achieved through public/private partnerships. It also shows that through a lot of hard work and ingenuity we can solve problems which have eluded us as a city for decades," stated Mayor Pawlowski. "Working with J.G. Petrucci and Bennett Toyota We have taken an old battery plant that has been vacant and abandoned for over 20 years, cleaned it up, are constructing a green LEED certified building which will sell hybrid fuel efficient cars and will ultimately have a hybrid fueling station on site, what a great use for a former brownfield site."

Bennett and Petrucci join a long list of businesses that have expressed confidence in Allentown and the Pawlowski Administration since 2006. The opening of the P&P Mills Apartments in July, the ongoing construction of the Cosmopolitan Restaurant, new and renovated businesses on 7th Street, bike races and concerts on Hamilton Street and a focused and collaborative effort to map a strong future for the City of Allentown are sending signals of strength to interested developers and entrepreneurs.

"It's very clear that investors and developers are responding to our efforts to turn Allentown around," said Mayor Pawlowski. "Projects such as the P&P condominiums off American Parkway, the Cosmopolitan on the site of the former Sal's, and other

positive signs across the city are great news for both Allentown and the taxpayers who will ultimately reap the benefits of this new development."

The 7th Street Main Street program has brought new pride and several new restaurants and retailers to the city's gateway boulevard, while events such as the initial Lehigh Valley Classic international professional bicycle race and festivals such as "Blues, Brews and Barbeques" are giving visitors new reasons to visit Center City.

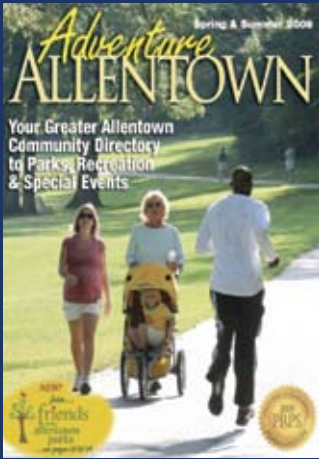
The new Cosmopolitan restaurant is under construction on 6th Street across from Symphony Hall, while plans to renovate the nearby Schoen's building are moving ahead. The unique Schoen's project will provide the new corporate headquarters for Nic Zawarski and Sons Inc., a major Lehigh Valley builder, which has also proposed an upscale restaurant and residential condominium units for the

"This project offers a great example of the benefits that can be achieved through public/private partnerships."

building, which will be a western anchor for the Allentown Arts Walk.

While these and other projects are underway, both city administrators and several local organizations are working to come up with ways to ensure that the positive development continues.

The Hamilton Street Visioning Committee, spearheaded by the Greater Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce, and the Allentown Ahead committee are working with business and community leaders to increase public participation and support for the redevelopment efforts. ■



Adventure Allentown Parks and Recreation Guide available for download at www.allentownpa.gov

Allentown Parks, Recreation and Trails Department Wins Statewide Recognition, Creates Innovative New Programs

Innovative new programs, award-winning outreach efforts and comprehensive plans to upgrade and update the Parks and Recreation system are bringing regional and state recognition to a city long known for its nationally renowned parks.

From a Midnight Basketball Youth Mentoring Initiative and Youth Boxing, (popular programs aimed at keeping kids off the street and away from gangs) to the award-winning “Adventure Allentown” publication that details the city’s many great events and offerings, the new Parks, Recreation and Trails Department is making a significant difference in Allentown.

“Adventure Allentown” was recognized this year by the Pennsylvania Parks and Recreation Society as the winner of its annual “Excellence in Agency Publication” competition for its informative, attractive and user-friendly presentation.

Recipients of the award are noted for their innovation, quality and efficient use of resources. Adventure Allentown contains information on special events, youth and adult programs, city parks and golf, music and theater, the library and museums, outdoor adventure and other useful information for city park and recreation services. The guide also includes maps of parks and

recreation areas, event schedules and a comprehensive list of community agencies dedicated to youth, adults and senior citizens.

“We are very proud to accept this award and I am very proud of the work performed by our Parks, Recreation and Trails Department,” said Mayor Ed Pawlowski, who created the department with advice and guidance from the Trexler Foundation. “We are also very proud of our efforts to rebuild our relationship with the Trexler Foundation and will continue to move ahead with plans to keep Allentown’s position as a nationally recognized parks and recreation system.” ■

MAYOR
ED PAWLOWSKI
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