



## NEWS RELEASE

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

#### City Announces Progress Made on Tax Levy Promises

SPRINGFIELD, OH (Jan. 6, 2020) — The City of Springfield has made significant advances in the 2 ½ years since the passage of the tax levy, city officials announced.

Springfield voters approved a 0.4 percent local income tax increase by a 2-to-1 margin in May 2017. The increase would generate an additional \$6.7 million a year for the city over a 5 ½ year period. The tax levy came after State of Ohio funding cuts of more than \$21.5 million forced the City of Springfield into a budget crisis that threatened the delivery of critical services to the local community.

“Although the City of Springfield remained proactive and fiscally responsible in the face of these cuts, we knew that moving forward we would have to take even more action,” said Springfield Mayor Warren Copeland. “We kept spending flat and cut our expenses for 10 years, but that meant having to eliminate vital services to the community.”

Prior to the levy’s passage, the City closed the Springfield Fire Rescue Division Station #5 at 1707 Commerce Road, and eliminated one fire and one EMS unit. Officials shuttered Springfield Police Division’s substation at 17 W. Johnny Lytle Ave., losing its presence in the neighborhood and impacting efforts in community policing. Community police and fire programs were canceled, including Bike Camp and Citizen’s Police Academy. Funding to National Trail Parks and Recreation District was reduced. At least 145 city staff positions were cut, for an overall reduction of more than 20 percent.

“Had the people of Springfield not voted for the tax levy, we would have had to reduce more services in our public safety divisions. That would have impacted emergency response times and our ability to combat violent crime and the opioid epidemic,” said Copeland. “Futhermore, our streets would have continued to deteriorate because we wouldn’t have the funds to support the Neighborhood Street Paving Program.”

Copeland said that since the levy’s passage, officials have made progress in the following commitments made to voters:

- Reopen Johnny Lytle Avenue community police station and reinstate community programs such as Bike Camp and Citizen's Police Academy.
  - Substation reopened in July 2017 and is currently the location of the Springfield Police Division Community Response Team
  - Officers active in community and neighborhood events
  - Citizen's Police Academy resumed with 60+ graduates
  - Three Bike Camps held with 100+ child participants
- Add six police officers to combat violent crime and heroin epidemic and provide critical funding needed to keep our neighborhoods safe.
  - Open recruitment campaigns held in 2017, 2018 and 2019
  - Lateral hires (from other law enforcement agencies) made in 2017 through 2019
  - Safe Streets Task Force reinstated in 2018-2019
  - More than 490 arrests and seized firearms, methamphetamine, heroin and crack cocaine
  - Search warrants resulted in the capture of 120 grams of cocaine, 4 lbs. of marijuana, and \$13,070 in cash
- Reopen Fire Station #5 and reinstate a Fire/EMS Unit and invest in safety equipment, providing vital resources for our first responders.
  - Fire Station #5 reopened in July 2017 and remains in operation
  - Five new ambulances purchased and built at the local International Plant are currently in operation
  - Eight FLIR Systems thermal imagers that locate hotspots and improve safety purchased in January 2019
  - Carbon monoxide detectors purchased and credited for saving the lives of more than 100 people
  - Service improved with purchase of mechanical CPR devices and new handheld radios
- Dedicate \$2 million to improve neighborhood streets and improve streets making Springfield a better place.
  - Neighborhood Street Paving Program launched in 2018
  - More than \$4 million spent on repaving neighborhood streets in 2018 and 2019
  - Total of 26 neighborhood streets repaved
    - Berger (Lagonda east to end)
    - Broadway Street, between Bechtle and Western avenues
    - Cedarview and Juniper drives, north of McCreight Avenue
    - College Avenue, between Fountain Avenue and Limestone Street
    - E. Harding (Fountain to Limestone)
    - E. Ward (Limestone to Fountain)
    - Edgewood Avenue
    - El Camino (Santa Monica to Vester)
    - Englewood Road, between Fountain Avenue and Limestone Street
    - Fairview Avenue
    - Farnham Street, between Dibert and Innisfallen avenues
    - Greenwood Avenue
    - Hilltop (Lagonda east to end)
    - Kensington Place, between Fountain Avenue and Limestone Street
    - Olympic (Home to Apollo)
    - Parker Street
    - Race Street, between North and Rubsam streets

- Red Coach Drive
- Roberts Avenue
- Roscommon Drive, between Limestone Street and Prestwick Village
- South Clairmont Avenue, between Sheridan and Lexington avenues
- South Jackson Street, between State and Dibert streets
- Springmont (Oakleaf to Driscoll)
- Tecumseh Avenue
- Vester (El Camino to Derr)
- W. Perrin (Plum to Wittenberg)

“This type of progress doesn’t happen in a vacuum. I’m proud to be part of a community that achieves great things when we work together toward common goals,” said Copeland. “I’m most proud of my fellow Springfielders, for the faith they placed in us to help carry our community toward a better future. And, I’m grateful for the men and women who work in our organizations, working hard every day to serve the people of Springfield, and making our city an even better place to work, live and play.”