EAST CHICAGO life

YOUR LOCAL SOURCE FOR EAST CHICAGO NEWS AND EVENTS

DEPARTMENTS FEATURED IN THIS ISSUE...

Building
James Portalatin
Commissioner
(219) 391-8294

Parks & Recreation
Mayra Acosta
Director
(219) 391-8474

Planning & Economic Development
Marino Solario
Director
(219) 391-8205

Public Works
Keith Selvie
Director
(219) 391-8463

"From beautification to recreation, we have many accomplishments to celebrate this holiday season"

With one foot in 2018 and the other preparing to step firmly into 2019, this is an ideal time to take stock of our accomplishments while we look forward to another banner year.



BEAUTIFICATION: Millions of dollars in improvements at East Chicago Marina were warmly welcomed by residents and visitors, alike. From the marina harbor walk, opening of a permanent stage, addition of water sports like paddle-boarding and scuba diving, along with the installation of beachfront sculptures and restoration of the dune have made the East Chicago lakefront a premier destination.

RECREATION: Our residents are already logging big-time hours at our two new recreation centers, which were reconstructed to include fitness centers. Heritage Hall and Clemente-Penn UNITY Center are welcome indoor recreational and social spaces that have something for everyone.

RENOVATION: While all of those projects were taking shape, East Chicago embarked on an ambitious vision to transform North Harbor. New infrastructure as well as the Fitzsimmons project are creating retail and housing opportunities. A pair of groundbreakings will follow in 2019 for individual, family and senior housing. We are putting the pieces of this complex renovation together in an exciting way that will serve the needs of our residents for decades to come.

JUBILATION: I wish to all of my East Chicago family the happiest of holidays and the merriest of Christmases as we look forward to a season of peace and good will.

ANTHONY COPELAND
Mayor City of East Chicago

SNOW OR ICE: WE'VE GOT YOU COVERED!

Long before the first flake falls, Public Works Director Keith Selvie is well into snow mode – planning for the first, fifth, even seventh big snow of a season that packs a punch.

By November, Selvie and his crews have prepared for the unknown – purchasing 5,000 tons of road salt – while prepping plows for the job ahead.

Snow removal is activated by a National Weather Service Advisory or notification from East Chicago police. First out the door are a minimum of 14 plows that target major roads.

"When we get the advisory, we begin applying beet juice to main thoroughfares, roundabouts and bridges," Selvie said. "Beet juice is operational at lower temperatures than road salt alone and can last for two to five days."

Selvie loves the job – even its unpredictability. "Since I've been here – even with the influence of Lake Michigan to enhance our snowfalls – we have never had to shut the city down," he said.

"We work until the job is done and then get prepared for the weather that is going to hit us next." •

PLOWING STREETS

Public Works Director Keith Selvie has created a priority system for snow removal, which takes into consideration public safety and efficiency. Streets are cleared in the following order:

1. The most heavily traveled roads are the highest priority, including Kennedy, Main, Guthrie, Michigan, Cardinal and Euclid.
2. Roads surrounding St. Catherine Hospital
3. Streets by schools
4. Police and fire stations along with Jeorse Circle
5. A minimum of 14 plows are dedicated to the city's seven zones to clear residential thoroughfares beginning with number streets and followed by name streets.

TIPS FOR RESIDENTS

Snow no-no's have been created to keep motorists safer and trim the time it takes to clear roadways.

SNOW PARKING SIGNS: They are there for a good reason: Parked cars make it harder for the plows to do their jobs. Towing cars is the avenue of last resort — but is sometimes necessary.

SHOVELING SNOW: When digging your car out — don't throw snow into the street. Shovel it onto the parkway instead.

DRIVING IN SNOW: Stay off the road during the height of the storm unless it is an emergency.



QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS?

Please call the East Chicago Public Works Department at (219) 391-8463.



East Chicago Mayor Anthony Copeland, city leaders and community members proudly look on as 6th District Councilwoman Gilda Orange cuts the ribbon to the new Clemente-Penn UNITY Center in the North Harbor. [Steve Segura photos]

CITY UNVEILS NEWEST RECREATION CENTER

East Chicago's newest venue opened to the oohs and aahs of an enthusiastic group of residents who are already making themselves at home at the Clemente-Penn UNITY Center.

The companion to the new Heritage Hall that opened this summer, Unity Center replaces the Penn and Clemente recreation centers as a hub for sports, education, the arts and social engagement in North Harbor.

Timing couldn't have been better.

"We opened Unity Center one day before the season's first snowfall, which is the same time basketball and other sports start moving inside," Parks and Recreation Director Mayra Acosta said. "We invite everyone to visit the Unity Center, take a tour and see all we have to offer here."

The $3.8 million investment was created based on an assessment of need. The result: a world-class center that provides something for everyone.



UNITY CENTER

3623 Guthrie Street

This 17,000-square-foot recreation center features a large gymnasium, indoor track, exercise room and two multi-purpose rooms.

Hours of Operation:

Monday through Friday
10 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Saturday
9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

INFO: For more information or to become a member, please call the Parks & Recreation office at (219) 391-8474.

"Unifying the two centers under one umbrella is good for the community. Unity Hall is already serving as an anchor for the North Harbor redevelopment, which is being developed to enhance quality of life, commerce and livable spaces," Mayor Anthony Copeland said. "We have made vast improvements in North Harbor and will continue to follow our plan for revitalizing this area as a premier neighborhood in East Chicago." •



BUILDING COMMUNITY WITH NEW HOUSING

Months after crews began work on the transformation of the former Fitzsimmons furniture store into a retail/housing development, the city has established an ambitious agenda to add both commerce and new residents to North Harbor.

It's all part of Mayor Anthony Copeland's comprehensive plan to make North Harbor a destination – a bustling mix of storefronts, homes and greenspace steps away from a newly renovated Jeorse Park on Lake Michigan. Years in the planning, city leaders are fitting the pieces together.

LAKESHORE MANOR

Three multi-story buildings are planned to replace the Nicosia Senior Housing building, which has outlived its useful life. The senior complex will be located on both sides of Main Street on what had been 36 homes and businesses. City Planner Marino Solorio said the city began amassing adjacent parcels as they became available to facilitate projects such as this.



ALDER COMMONS

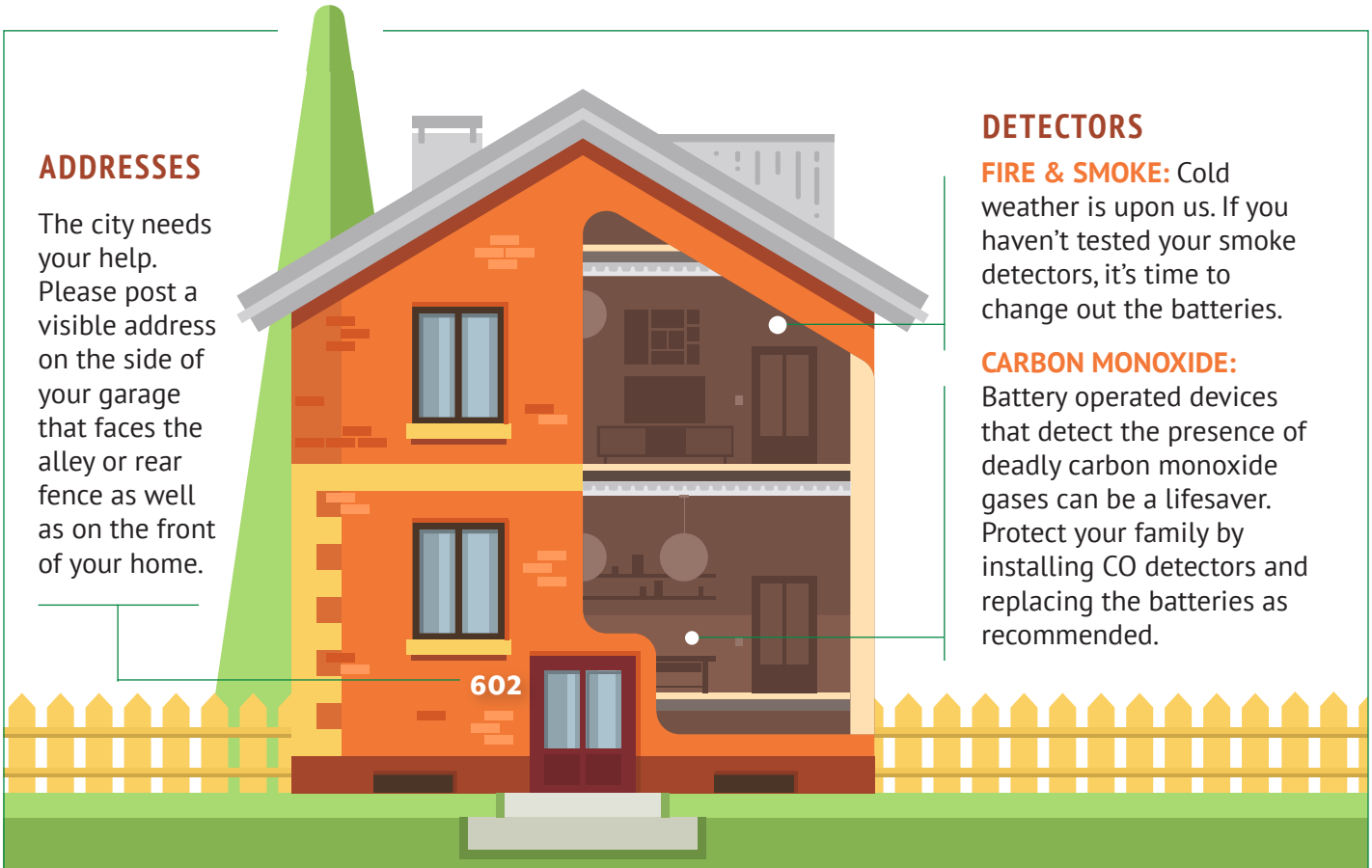
This exciting addition to North Harbor will mirror the Fitzsimmons redevelopment project with complementary street-side retail. In all, 28 affordable apartments are planned to be included as part of the mixed-use development along Broadway between Alder and Pulaski streets. The project may grow to include energy-efficient single-family homes and four-bedroom rentals.

TOWNHOMES

Up the street from Alder Commons, the city is considering a townhome or mixed-use development between Fir Street and Grand Boulevard. Altogether, six two-story, three- and four-bedroom units could be built on the site, which could include a shared recreation space and covered parking. Urban studies show thoughtful, mixed-used development is a predictor of success for downtowns.

ADDRESSES

The city needs your help. Please post a visible address on the side of your garage that faces the alley or rear fence as well as on the front of your home.



DETECTORS

FIRE & SMOKE: Cold weather is upon us. If you haven't tested your smoke detectors, it's time to change out the batteries.

CARBON MONOXIDE: Battery operated devices that detect the presence of deadly carbon monoxide gases can be a lifesaver. Protect your family by installing CO detectors and replacing the batteries as recommended.

KEEPING YOUR HOUSE UP-TO-CODE

DID YOU KNOW? East Chicago requires landlords to register every occupied rental unit between Jan. 7 and April 15. The cost is $5 per unit during the registration period and $105 per unit after April 15. This annual registration is not optional. It's the law. You can register your properties at the Building Department, 4525 Indianapolis. Visit **eastchicago.com** for a complete list of essential documents.

GENERAL UPKEEP

As we transition to colder and snowier weather, please make sure the railings and steps to your home are in good shape and that all exits are free of obstacles. It's one of the best ways to keep your family safe.

GARAGE MAINTENANCE

Dilapidated garages are a problem the Board of Safety takes very seriously. Not only an eyesore, they are a hazard. If you don't maintain your garage, the city will take it down and charge you for it.

GARBAGE CANS

Overflowing garbage cans are an eyesore and invitation to critters looking for an easy meal. If your garbage cart is consistently overflowing, call Solid Waste at (219) 391-8463 to inquire about a second cart. The same goes for apartment owners, who can rent an additional dumpster from the city for an additional charge.

QUESTIONS? For more about these and other city codes, call Building Commissioner James Portalatin at (219) 391-8294.

WINTER ACTIVITIES

Looking for something to do during the winter months? Check out these indoor Parks & Recreation activities that are free to members:

ROCK CLIMBING

Test your Mt. Everest potential at the indoor rock-climbing venue, which has two skill levels – one for beginners and another for advanced climbers.

WHEN: 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. **Monday through Friday,** 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. **Saturday**
WHERE: Heritage Hall

ADULT COLORING

Escape the daily pressures of life and explore the soothing and therapeutic benefits that coloring offers.

WHEN: 1-2 p.m. **Wednesday, December 5** and **12**
WHERE: Unity Center

SOCIAL MEDIA CLASSES

Bring your smartphone, tablet or laptop and learn how to tweet, post and share with friends and family on social media!

WHEN: 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. **Tuesday, December 4** and **11**
WHERE: Unity Center

SHUFFLE & DEAL CARDS

Deal me in! Learn to play popular card games or come with a partner and show your level of expertise.

WHEN: noon to 1 p.m. **Friday, December 7** and **14**
WHERE: Unity Center

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more on activities or membership opportunities, please call (219) 391-8747.

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