EAST CHICAGO life

YOUR LOCAL SOURCE FOR EAST CHICAGO NEWS AND EVENTS

EAST CHICAGO STRONGER TOGETHER

City of East Chicago
Hope & Progress
INDIANA

DO YOUR PART – GET THE SHOT!

State stats show East Chicago residents are lagging when it comes to COVID-19 vaccines. So far, four out of five eligible residents are unvaccinated while the number of new COVID cases continues to rise. If you haven't been vaccinated, East Chicago Mayor Anthony Copeland asks that you get the shot — unless cautioned otherwise by your physician.

Eligible Residents
21,050

Fully Vaccinated
4,757 as of May 6

Visit **ourshot.in.gov** to schedule yours!

NEW PLANTS, PRECAUTIONS AND PROGRAMS

BEAUTIFICATION ...

For East Chicago, celebrating Arbor Day 2021 was just the beginning. On our agenda this year: incorporate additional plantings on public land while we await the final tree sculpture that has "eyes." If you haven't seen the tree sculptures yet; don't wait. Their beauty is fleeting. Carved out of ash trees felled by the emerald ash borer, the sculptures may only have another five to seven years before all that remains is our memories of the artwork.

VACCINATION ...

As we rush out to enjoy this gorgeous weather, beautiful plants in bloom and the tantalizing idea that cookouts can't be far behind, I want to urge residents to take the same precautions we have been for the last year. Include hand sanitizer when you head outdoors. Remember the mask. Everyone 16 and older should schedule their vaccine. The reason: A little more than 20 percent of eligible residents have gotten their COVID shots. Our city is not close to where we need to be when it comes to getting vaccinated against this horrible illness. It's as close as the East Chicago Health Department. I got mine. Please make an appointment to get yours, too.



City leaders and members of the Student Conservation Association planted 50 native Indiana trees – in honor of our hardworking nurses – in Roxana Park and the surrounding neighborhood on Arbor Day. [Steve Segura photo]

INNOVATION ...

Kudos to Police Chief Hector Rosario for two initiatives that take what his department does to new highs. Inside this issue of East Chicago Life!, learn about our next generation of officers, who are getting their start through the cadet program, a partnership between the city and the schools. You can also get the details on the new street-crime unit. Both efforts are already making a difference.

ANTHONY COPELAND
Mayor City of East Chicago



Officers assigned to the Street Crime Unit have no set schedules or location – by design. Police Chief Hector Rosario says they focus on neighborhoods experiencing an uptick in illegal activity or a history of violence, amassing resources — such as the city's four-footed finest and their handlers, narcotics officers and detectives — based on their need. "We have high expectations," Rosario said. "This group of motivated officers went into police work to make a difference. Now they are seeing that difference in real time." [Photo provided]

CRIME-FIGHTING UNIT HITS EAST CHICAGO STREETS

The Street Crime Unit doesn't hide in the shadows.

Patrol Cmdr. Justin Orange, who heads the task force, says the elite group of a dozen East Chicago police officers travels in teams, visiting criminal hot spots and areas notorious for gun violence and narcotics.

In its first two weeks, the team collected seven illegal guns, made 45 arrests and seized a large quantity of illicit drugs.

"Residents knew from the first day they saw a trail of East Chicago patrol cars heading to a hot spot that something good was happening," Orange said. "They're thrilled we are making their neighborhoods safer."

There are days when there is no gunfire anywhere in the city.

"What we are noticing is that wherever we are, illegal activity stops," Orange said.

That great reception from the community is being followed by a series of walk-and-talks, where officers along with top brass knock on doors in a neighborhood to meet residents, answer their questions and hand out information about what they are doing.

"Residents are happy we are out here," he said. "They can put a name to our faces and tell us their concerns while we discuss the issues and how we are solving them."

SEE SOMETHING. SAY SOMETHING. Call our anonymous tip hotline at (219) 391-8500.



More than a century after a steel mill birthed a community, Mayor Anthony' Copeland's development team – including City Planner Doug Powers (left) and Project Management Director Keith Selvie – is taking swaths of vacant properties cobbled together over time to position the city on the lake for a bright new future. [Steve Segura photo]

PLANNING TEAM KEEPS PROJECTS RUNNING

Great public projects that have long-lasting positive impact on communities are the result of a team of people. These folks are always on the lookout for economic development that benefit the community now – and in the future.

For East Chicago, that journey begins with Project Management Director Keith Selvie and City Planner Douglas Powers. Together, they bring the totality of all city departments to create and refine a vision while marshaling resources to bring projects to life.

"It was the mayor's vision to transform the Broadway corridor more than 10 years ago," Selvie said. "Today, a series of developments is adding modern housing, fresh storefronts and a business incubator that is revitalizing the neighborhood now known as North Harbor."

Selvie will be the first to detail why transformation is more than bricks and mortar – why aesthetics like street scapes and lighting matter. At the same time, Powers is scouring city laws that have been on the books for decades to determine what needs to be changed for 21st century East Chicago.

[UPCOMING PROJECTS]

District 1: A private company has plans to erect a commercial building on Homerlee yet this year.

District 2: South Shore double-tracking completion is extending a welcome mat to commuters, making Roxana ripe for expanded retail and housing near the station.

District 3: After amassing dilapidated properties for more than a decade, the city is preparing to build homes and invite new residents to the city.

District 4: A reimagined Block Stadium will be calling balls and strikes again this summer after a three-season construction.

District 5: Gateway Partners plans to construct a clean industrial building this year once the $27 million environmental clean-up is completed on 400 acres that once housed DuPont.

District 6: The reconstruction of Guthrie Street is creating infrastructure to support existing businesses and the streetscape to attract new.

POLICE, CODE ENFORCEMENT WORKING TOGETHER

East Chicago Police Chief Hector Rosario believes tackling what looks like small problems are the key to effective police work. Deputy Police Chief Jose Rivera and Patrol Cmdr. Justin Orange are working with Code Enforcement to eliminate systemic problems with rental properties and out-of-state vehicle licenses. The goal, he said, is to work together for the betterment of all.

[LANDLORDS & TENANTS]

When police respond to a potentially lethal domestic issue at a rental property or there are numerous calls about a nuisance building owned by an absentee landlord, it won't be long before Deputy Police Chief Jose Rivera contacts the owner about their responsibility and repercussions if the situation is not remedied.

With 1,700 single- and multi-family homes within city limits, issues at rental properties keep Code Enforcement and police busy year-round.

"Building owners are told in no uncertain terms that they will be fined," Rivera said. "They rent to these individuals, which means they need to evict them if the situation is not resolved."

Police are eyeing an option that would require every absentee property owner to watch a city video detailing their responsibilities to keep the city safe and well-maintained.

INFO: If you have questions on any of the above topics or other possible violations, please call East Chicago Code Enforcement at (219) 391-8351.

[OUT-OF-STATE PLATES]

When tracking out-of-state license plate violators, police find the biggest abusers are former residents of Illinois and part-timers from Texas.

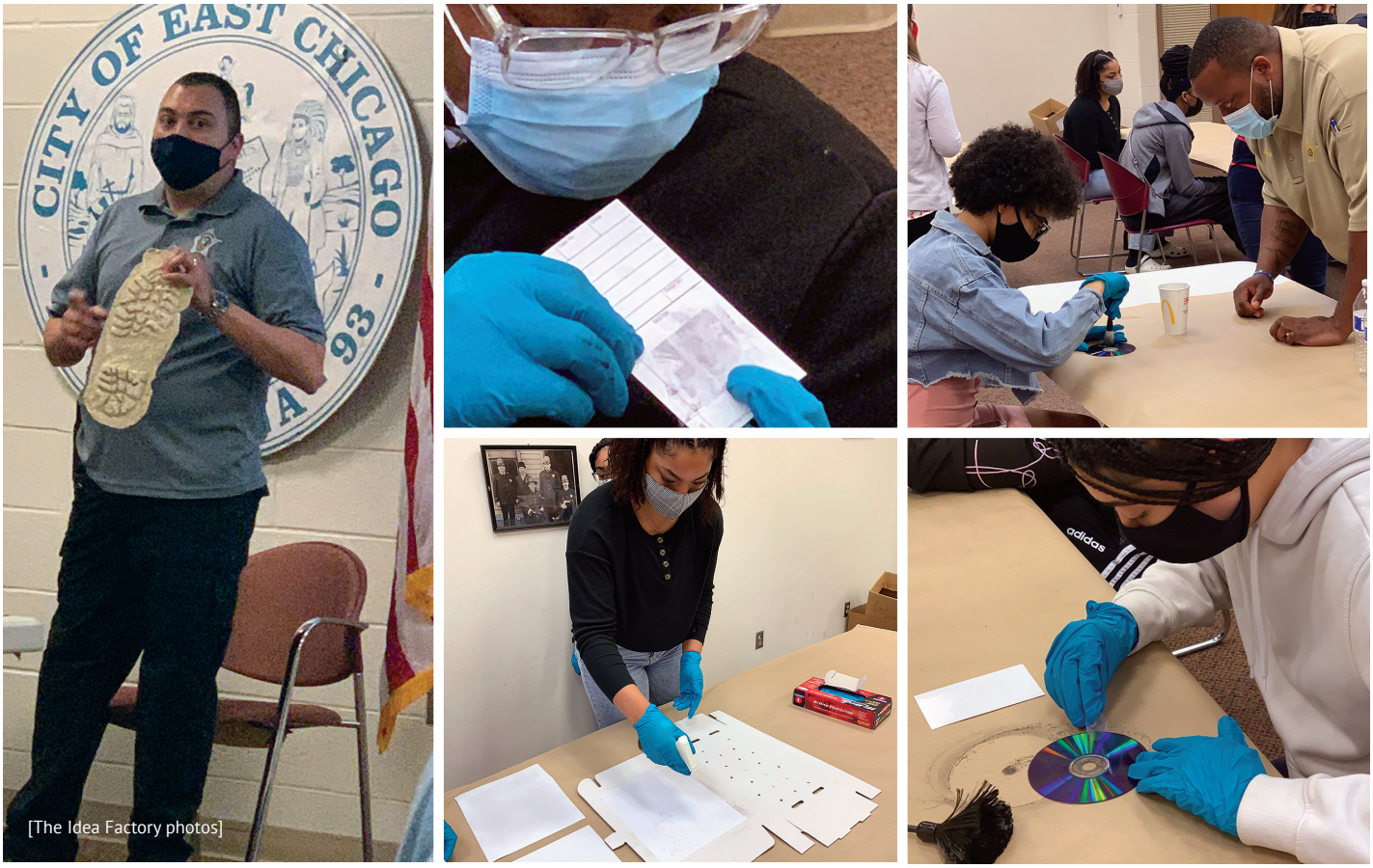
For police, Illinois violators are straightforward. They ticket newly minted Hoosiers who haven't changed their license on a regular basis. The city's lawyers are working to determine next steps for residents holding Texas car registrations who typically live in East Chicago six or more months each year.

Fines are steep: $500 for those who have lived in East Chicago less than a year. Judges have the option of imposing higher fines on those who have been in Indiana longer. Patrol Cmdr. Justin Orange said a citywide blitz in April resulted in 154 cars being tagged. Another blitz is scheduled for late June.

"We want every resident with an out-of-state plate to come into compliance with our laws before we ticket them," he said. "East Chicago loses money that could help pave streets and educate children every time a resident fails to register their vehicle in Indiana."

INFO: Learn more about registering your vehicle in Indiana at www.in.gov/bmv.





[The Idea Factory photos]

8 FEMALE CADETS DRAWN TO POLICING PROGRAM

When East Chicago Central High School and the East Chicago Police launched a pilot police cadet program earlier this year, Sophomores Jaelyn King and Anylah McAfee were first in line.

"The class came at the perfect time," McAfee said. "I was already looking at a career as a criminologist and the psychology of crime. This gives me a head start."

With aspirations to study law and build skills that will take her to the FBI, King says the course has reinforced her decision. "I want to work in law enforcement more now than I did before," she said. "My favorite class has been the crime scene, where we had to use clues at a scene to determine who committed the murder."

In all, eight female cadets — Cierra Battle, Natalie Delgado, Kelly Hinton, Jaelyn King, Sarinity Mayes, Anylah McAfee and Myteonna Phillips — are exploring crime and law enforcement alongside East Chicago's finest. From fingerprinting to the actual process of solving crimes using evidence found at the scene, Patrol Cmdr. Justin Orange said cadets are getting a broad look at the many facets of policing from the officers who do those jobs every day.

"We are thrilled with this class of cadets. They are engaged and excited to learn about police work," Orange said. "Ours is a profession in desperate need of new blood and this group of students makes me excited about our future - and theirs."

INTERESTED IN THE PROGRAM? Beginning this fall, East Chicago Central High School will offer its first Police Cadet Program for credit as part of the Career and Technical Education curriculum. For more info, please contact Maren Lee, Director of CTE and Adult Education, at (219) 378-7310 or mlee@ecps.org.

DRAWING CONTEST

Residents ages 8-18 are invited to draw their favorite warm-weather activity at the parks and enter it in Parks and Rec's Summer Daze Art Contest. Winning artists will receive prizes and their artwork will be displayed in the city's 17 parks.

Deadline: 4 p.m. May 21

Info: Call (219) 391-8474 to register. Supplies can be picked up at the park office.

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

The City of East Chicago is seeking qualified candidates for the following jobs:

- Accountant – CPA
- Bridge Attendant Labor/PT
- Bus Driver
- Code Enforcement Officer
- Diesel/Gas Mechanic
- Electrical Engineer
- Maintenance Repairman
- Marina Labor/PT
- Operations Supervisor
- Parks Seasonal Labor
- Planning Department Administrative Intern/PT
- Police Department Administrative Intern/PT
- Public Health Nurse/PT
- Recreation Leader/PT
- Redevelopment Administrative Intern/PT
- Treatment Plant Operator Labor/PT
- Treatment Plant Asst. Operator Labor/PT
- Vehicle Maintenance Administrative Intern/PT
- Water Department Accountant - Contractual

Details: eastchicago.com/Jobs

Info: Call (219) 391-8479.

CITY OF EAST CHICAGO
4525 INDIANAPOLIS BOULEVARD
EAST CHICAGO, IN 46312

PRSRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE
EDDM
PAID
Gary, IN
PERMIT # 121

RESIDENT
EAST CHICAGO, INDIANA 46312

COLEUS • EUPHORIA • STIPA SIROCCO •
• CILANTRO SQUARE • SILVER MIST • AMARANTHS
SUN FLOWERS • ZINNIAS • PHLOX • VERBENA
• LEUCENTHEULUM SNOW • GOMPHRENA • ASTERS
COLUMBINE • COSMOS • ALYSSUM • SNAP DRAGONS
• ECHINACEA • DELPHINIUM • HIBISCUS • DAY LILIES
LAVENDER • HOSTAS • SPIDER PLANTS • MOTHER-IN-LAW
TONGUE • PURPLE HEARTS • ALOE • AGAVE • BANANA TREES
• RUBBER TREES • GINGER • RED OAKS • SILVER MAPLES •
SILKY DOGWOODS • NORWAY SPRUCE • SUMAC • CANA

Plant Sale

EAST CHICAGO GREENHOUSE • 1615 E. 142ND • WASHINGTON PARK

9-11 AM and **1-3 PM**
MONDAYS, TUESDAYS, WEDNESDAYS

while supplies last

FOR SENIORS ONLY

East Chicago's senior residents can shop from 9-11 a.m. the first Friday of the month while supplies last.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Call the Parks & Recreation office at (219) 391-8474.