



PRESS RELEASE

From Mayor Dean E. DePiero

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Created last fall to assess City's financial future...

Parma Mayor DePiero applauds independent Blue Ribbon panel's report

(Parma) – Parma Mayor Dean DePiero today applauded a report released yesterday by an independent Blue Ribbon Commission of area business and community leaders whose task it was to assess the finances and services of Ohio's seventh largest city.

The panel presented its report at a special city council meeting last night in Council Chambers.

Among the commissions recommendations to bolster municipal finances in the wake of certain loss of income tax revenue is to place a new police department operating levy on the ballot in 2007.

Other recommendations to bolster revenue and improve Parma's image is a call for a point-of-sale inspection on residential and rental properties, establish a Civilian Police Review Board and join a countrywide sanitary sewer maintenance program.

Commission members met with city administrators and collected data on areas such as finances and taxation, city image and leisure services, public safety, housing and economic development.

The committee report emphasized the economic impact facing the city with the loss of income tax revenues from companies such as Tops and Shiloh Industries which closed in 2006, and the loss of approximately 800 General Motors jobs after the company offered employee buyouts last year.

"It is clear that the City of Parma must band together if we are to continue being a premiere municipality known for first class city services," DePiero said.

DePiero said that a key to Parma's future viability is what he terms "Progress through Partnerships" – a collaboration with City Hall, local businesses, churches, the school district and residents.

"City Hall cannot do it alone," DePiero said. "There must be a concerted effort by all working in harmony to insure Parma's viability."

The panel also made 15 specific recommendations to the City to include:

- Developing a revised Master Plan to be put before voters for approval.
- Formulating a comprehensive design plan for commercial properties.
- Offering incentives to developers to build upscale housing in the city.
- Developing a business incubator facility to support entrepreneurial initiatives that can stimulate Parma's economy.
- Enhancing efforts to establish collaborative endeavors within the city, possibly using citizen volunteers.

DePiero said that his Administration and City Council will examine all aspects of the report.

"I thank the Commission for its tireless work on behalf of the City," DePiero said.

Serving on the committee were: Rev. Todd Biermann (chairman), Barry Franklin (Parma Community General Hospital), Thomas Jones (President, Marionette, Inc.), David Nedrich (General Motors), Robin Darden (Cuyahoga County Treasurer's Office), Kevin Yaughner (Marc Glassman, Inc.) and Willian Ziganti (retiree).

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