



Hello Hamilton County

June 2010

E-News for Hamilton County citizens and employees

Quote of the month:

“It is never too late to be what you might have been.”

~ George Eliot

Treasurer's Optional Payment (TOP) Program Makes Property Tax Installment Payments Possible

In Hamilton County, property owners pay real estate taxes twice each year — in January and June. If paying your June tax bill has got you thinking that you would prefer to pay your taxes in smaller installments, you may want to check out the Treasurer's Optional Payment (TOP) program.

The TOP program allows residential and commercial property owners to prepay their real estate taxes in installments. The program is voluntary and allows property owners to prepay each future tax bill in five installments. There is no service charge associated with the program.

“This program really helps people with long term budgeting,” said Hamilton County Treasurer Robert A. Goering.

Property owners who enroll in the TOPS program now would receive coupons in August to begin paying off the January 2011 tax bill in installments.

Once enrolled in the program, property owners would receive four prepayment coupons, representing their estimated tax payment. Each month, they would mail their one-fifth payment, along with a coupon, to the Treasurer's office. Their first half tax bill would reflect all prepayments made and the final balance due.

Hamilton County Treasurer Robert A. Goering started the TOPS program in 1997. Currently, over 13,000 property owners are enrolled. Response has been positive!

For more information about the program, please call 513-946-4788 or visit this link to print an application form:

<http://www.hamiltoncountyohio.gov/treasurer/Documents/TOP1.htm>



Hamilton County Treasurer
Robert A. Goering

**Hamilton County
real estate bills were
mailed 5/28/2010.**

**Payment is due
Monday, June 21, 2010.**

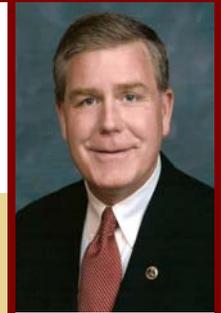
**For helpful information,
please visit the
Treasurer's website:**

<http://www.hamiltoncountyohio.gov/treasurer/default.asp>



Patrick's Perspective

Banks Project Progress is a Result of Successful Collaboration



**Patrick Thompson,
Hamilton County
Administrator**

It's hard to believe we're into June and 2010 is almost half over. Mid-year is always a good time to examine progress with projects, and I'm especially pleased about the progress being made with one of our region's biggest endeavors: The Banks Project.

In May, The Board of County Commissioners and I received an update from Banks Project Executive John Deatrack. He reported many positive developments, including:

- Banks Project construction is on schedule;
- The Banks Project's safety record is strong. There have been no lost time accidents;
- The Banks Project's contracting goals regarding small business enterprise are not just achieved, but exceeded;
- The Banks Project is progressing under budget.

Challenges remain, but Phase I of the Underbuild—Infrastructure part of the project is nearing completion. Phase I includes constructing a 1,100 space underground parking garage and new streets. The parking garage, which is owned and operated by Hamilton County, is complete and opened for public use on June 1.

Phase II of the Underbuild - Infrastructure portion of the project has begun. It includes moving Mehring Way further North, away from the river, to create more space for the planned Riverfront Park); the development of another block of parking facilities; and

adding a section of the Ohio River Bike Trail. This phase is scheduled for completion at the end of 2011.

All three aspects of The Banks Project (the parking garage, the streetgrid and utility infrastructure, and the park) are well underway with Phase I nearing completion.

All of this came into being because in 2007, through a series of agreements, the City of Cincinnati and Hamilton County reinvigorated central riverfront development by establishing The Banks Public Partnership. Since then, employees from both governments have worked hard to bring to fruition the planned mixed-use development on the Ohio River between Paul Brown Stadium and Great American Ball Park and south of Fort Washington Way. They share the goal of working together to ensure timely, safe, efficient and inclusive management of the public portion of the project and deliver the best value for the public investment.

Phase I of the public portion of the project has laid the foundation for the private developer to construct the residential, office, and entertainment components, becoming the city's vibrant new front yard.

The City-County team's primary contracted support includes:

- Carter (Program Manager)
- Messer (Construction Manager)
- THP Ltd (Architect and Engineer, Garage)
- Burgess & Niple (Architect and Engineer, Public Streets Infrastructure)

- Elington Management Services (Inclusion Consultant)

Of course, there is more to The Banks Project than the Underbuild-Infrastructure portion. The Overbuild—Private Development portion of the project is being led by Carter Dawson. It will include 300 luxury apartments, street level retail, and above ground parking. This part of the project began in December 2009 and should be done by Spring 2011.

Also being developed is the Cincinnati Riverfront Park. This park is part of the Cincinnati Parks Department. Planned amenities include a Moerlein Lager House restaurant and brewery, fountains, an event lawn and stage, a floral garden, and a bike center.

It's exciting to envision what a great place the Banks will be. For years to come, Hamilton County citizens can enjoy the shopping, the restaurants, the park, and the new living space that will be available along our riverfront.

The Banks Project is one of the most robust economic development projects in the State of Ohio, and I'm proud that Hamilton County is playing such a key role in it.

To follow the progress on The Banks Project, please visit the websites listed on the next page.



The Banks Project Progress Through May 2010

For more information about the Banks Project's progress,
please visit these websites:

www.TheBanksPublicPartnership.com
www.TheBanksCincy.com
www.CRPark.org





Home Improvement Projects May Require Building or Zoning Permits

Many home improvement projects, including do-it-yourself type projects, require building and/or zoning permits. Both types of permits are designed to protect people's health and safety.

So how do you know if you need a building or zoning permit? The nature and scope of your project will determine if a permit is needed. The safest bet? Contact your local jurisdiction to see if your project requires a permit.

Zoning regulations control location, height, and size of all structures located on private and publicly owned property. The types of projects that require a zoning certificate include building a deck, constructing a fence, building a swimming pool (in-ground or above ground), constructing an addition to the main structure, finishing a basement, constructing a detached garage, or building a storage shed. This list is not all-inclusive, so check with your jurisdiction about your projects!



Building regulations control how a structure is constructed. A building permit is required for all of the aforementioned structures, except fences and sheds less than 200 square feet in size. You also need

building permits for many interior renovations, such as replacing your furnace or hot water heater, any electrical or plumbing work, or any structural work. Again, check with your jurisdiction to find out if you need a building permit.

It's important to get the proper permits before you start your projects. So who should you contact?

Where to apply for a building or zoning permit depends on where within Hamilton County you live. There are 49 different jurisdictions throughout the county.

If you'd like to see who to contact for more information regarding permits for your property, Hamilton County can help. Click on the link below, enter your address, and you'll see information about which entities govern permits for you.

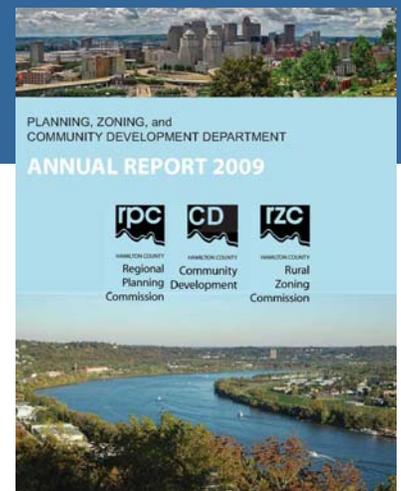
www.hamiltoncountyohio.gov/hc/connect.asp

Planning, Zoning, and Community Development 2009 Annual Report Now Available

Much of the work related to growth of the community in Hamilton County is done by the Regional Planning Commission, Rural Zoning Commission, and Community Development.

You can check out their 2009 initiatives and progress in their Annual Report. It's available at this link:

<http://www.hamiltoncountyohio.gov/hcrpc/pdf/2009RPCCDAnnualReport.pdf>





OPERS Town Hall Meeting in Blue Ash to Focus on Recommended Pension Plan Design Changes



The Ohio Public Employee Retirement System (OPERS) is holding a series of town hall meetings at locations around the state, including one in Blue Ash in June.

These meetings are open to all OPERS members and are designed to provide information and answer questions about the recommended pension plan design changes. Pre-registration is not required.

OPERS Town Hall Meeting in Blue Ash
University of Cincinnati's Regional Campus - Raymond Walters College
Muntz Hall Auditorium (Parking is adjacent to the auditorium).
Tuesday, June 8, 2010
5 p.m. – 6:15 p.m.

For a map and directions, please visit this link:

<http://www.rwc.uc.edu/maps/directions.htm>

For parking information, please visit this link:

<http://www.rwc.uc.edu/maps/images/floorplans/RWC%20parking%20map1.pdf>

Hamilton County Law Library Provides Educational Opportunity for Attorneys

In June, the Hamilton County Law Library will provide a seminar for attorneys.

Mining Social Media:

How to Locate Witnesses, Vet Experts & Learn More About Jurors

Presented by Shannon Kemen

Thursday, June 24, 2010

Hamilton County Courthouse: Hamilton County Law Library Board Room

1000 Main Street, Cincinnati, Ohio 45202

12:30 p.m.—1:30 p.m.

Attendees earn one hour of CLE credit. The seminar is free for court and county officials and for law library subscribers. Non-subscribers are welcome to attend for a \$35 fee.

To register, please e-mail Glenna at gherald@cms.hamilton-co.org or call 513-946-5300.



Hamilton County Public Health Encourages You to Stay Healthy While Swimming This Summer

As summer begins, Hamilton County Public Health wants everyone to be aware of healthy swimming behaviors, particularly ways to prevent recreational water illnesses.

Germs are spread by swallowing or having contact with contaminated water in swimming pools, water parks, hot tubs, interactive fountains, water play areas, lakes, rivers, or oceans.

“The best way to prevent recreational water illnesses is to keep germs out of the pool,” said Hamilton County Health Commissioner Tim Ingram. “All swimmers and parents of young children should do their part to maintain the safety of pools and recreational water activities.”

Swimmers can become infected with recreation water illnesses by swallowing, breathing, or having contact with contaminated water from swimming pools. Swimmers who are ill may contaminate the water, posing a health risk for the healthy swimmers in the pool.

Chlorine kills most germs over time, but some germs can survive in chlorinated water up to



several days. These healthy swimming behaviors are important to remember this summer:

1. Do not swim and don't allow children to swim when experiencing diarrhea. You can spread germs in the water and make other people sick.
2. Don't swallow the pool water, and try to avoid getting any in your mouth.
3. Practice good hygiene. Shower before swimming, and wash your hands after using the toilet or changing diapers. Germs on your body end up in the water.
4. Take children on bathroom breaks or change diapers often.
5. Change diapers in a bathroom, not poolside. Germs can spread to surfaces and objects in and around the pool and spread illness.
6. Wash your child thoroughly with soap and water before and after swimming.

More information about healthy swimming is available at www.hamiltoncountyhealth.org and www.cdc.gov/healthyswimming.



Find Great Items and Bargains On the Hamilton County Surplus Auction!

If you're in the market for a street sweeper, office supplies, or computer equipment, you can find great deals on the Hamilton County Surplus Auction.

Visit this link today to see what's available:

www.hamiltoncountyohioauction.com





Borrow Recycling Containers to Make any Event Earth Friendly

The Hamilton County Department of Environmental Services (HCDOES) can help you make your next event more green, with no extra cost to you. Any group planning an event in Hamilton County can borrow recycling containers at no cost.



Once you have your containers, there are several measures to take to ensure that your program is as productive as possible. To prevent confusion and contamination of recyclable containers, place the recycling containers right beside trash cans. Make sure to provide both

The highly visible and portable containers are available for any event in Hamilton County. HCDOES provides the containers and plastic liners; event coordinators are responsible for collecting and recycling materials.

garbage and recycling containers at all major food areas and exits. It is also helpful to recruit volunteers to monitor the containers from time to time and remove items which do not belong.

Recyclable Items include:

- Plastic bottles and jugs (removable lids)
- Glass bottles and jars (removable lids)
- Aluminum, tin and steel cans

To request containers, contact HCDOES at 513-946-7737 or e-mail Cher Mohring at cher.mohring@hamilton-co.org.

For more information about recycling, please visit www.hamiltoncountyclecyles.org.

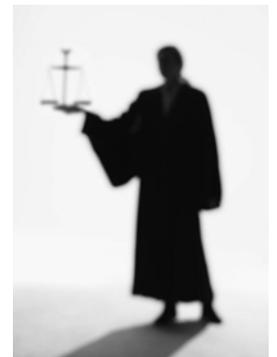
Hamilton County Law Library Invites All to Attend “You and the Legal System” Seminar

The Hamilton County Law Library, in conjunction with the Cincinnati Bar Association Lawyer Referral Service, will present “You and the Legal System: A Brief Overview of Wills, Trusts and Probate Administration.” This program is free to the public and is designed for the non-lawyer citizen.

Friday, June 18, 2010
12 noon—1 p.m.
Hamilton County Law Library
Hamilton County Courthouse, 6th Floor

Michael Mann, Attorney at Law, of Mann & Mann LLC in Cincinnati, will address these questions: What is a will? Why do I need a will? What is a trust? Why choose a trust versus a will? What if I don't have a will or trust? When is probate administration necessary? How does probate administration work?

Please call 513-946-5300 for more information or to reserve a seat.





Michelle Ray, County Facilities, Earns Archibus Distinguished User Award

Michelle Ray, County Facilities IS Manager, was presented with the Archibus Distinguished User Award in May.

Archibus is a database that County Facilities uses for Computer Aided Facility Management. Ray uses Archibus to manage all kinds of data in a cost-efficient way.

The award is presented to individuals and organizations who have provided sustained leadership with using Archibus. Specifically, it acknowledges Archibus users who serve as role models by using Archibus innovatively and strategically in the creation of cost-effective management policies.

"Michelle is an asset to my Department and the County as a whole," says Ralph Linne, Facilities Director. "She is a leader in the usage of Archibus in the government sector and is often contacted by her peers for advice and consul. This award is the result of her hard work as a public servant, and I am very

proud to see her receive this award."

Since 2001, Ray has enabled County Facilities to use Archibus to manage all kinds of data. For example, Facilities uses Archibus for ID badge management, safety plan evaluation drawings, emergency equipment location tracking, hazardous materials management, inventory control, fleet management, and for maintaining real estate information.

Ray says the county benefits from Archibus, because using the database saves time and costs associated with various tasks, processes, and reporting requirements.

Ray has expanded Archibus' benefit to Hamilton County beyond County Facilities' use, too. Ray has made Archibus available for other county organizations. Public Health, Environmental Services, and the Sheriff are just a few of the organizations currently using Archibus.



Michelle Ray, IS Manager, County Facilities

Ray is starting a new series of meetings for current Hamilton County Archibus users. The meetings will provide an opportunity to share best practices and discuss needs. Ray says Hamilton County employees whose organizations are interested in learning more about Archibus are welcome to attend the meetings.

For more information, please e-mail Michelle Ray at mray@cms.hamilton-co.org.



Seasongood Good Government Foundation Summer Intern Assists Budget Office

In March, Jenna Skop began a three month internship with the Hamilton County Department of Budget and Strategic Initiatives (BSI).

"Jenna has been exposed to a wide range of activities in County Administration," says Christian Sigman, Assistant County Administrator. "She updated our comparative tax market basket that documents all the local taxes and fees for comparable jurisdictions in the mid-west, she is gathering tax increment financing data to determine the lost revenue to the County, and she will be supporting the efforts of

the Government Reform Task Force."

Skop graduated from Xavier University in May with a Political Science major and a business minor. "I really enjoy how my internship with Budget and Strategic Initiatives combines both my areas of interest," says Skop. "I now understand how the various departments relate to each other and the county's responsibilities."

The internship is funded by the Seasongood Good Government Foundation's Summer Internship Program. The program's purpose is for interns to learn more about local government while contributing to government.



Hamilton County Department of Environmental Services' Recommendations: Reduce Energy Consumption and Save Money

If you think going green is only about hybrid cars and solar panels, think again. According to the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), there are plenty of ways to reduce your environmental impact right from home, without spending a dime.

Unplug electronic devices that are not in use

Did you know that electronic devices like computers, TVs and cell phones continue to drain power even while they are off and/or fully charged? According to the DOE, 75 percent of electricity used to power the average home is consumed while the products are off. To save energy, be sure to totally cut off power to your gizmos while they are not in use. Also consider using rechargeable batteries which are more cost effective than throwaway batteries. Just make sure you unplug them once fully charged!

Drive Safely

To help get the most out of your car, drive sensibly. Constantly speeding, accelerating and rapidly braking wastes gasoline and puts wear and tear on your vehicle. Also keep tires properly inflated to get the most out of your tank and protect those inside. Take unnecessary items out of the car. An extra 100 lbs in your vehicle could reduce your fuel efficiency by up to 2%. Lastly, consider carpooling. It's a great way to save energy, money and make new friends.

Cook faster, more efficiently

When it comes to making meals, a few simple tricks can save a lot of time, heat and energy. First, cover your pots with lids in order to get liquids to boil more quickly. Also be sure to use the correct



size burner for your pot or pan while cooking. Finally, use electric pans or toaster ovens for cooking smaller meals. According to the DOE, a toaster oven uses up to half as much energy as a full sized oven.

Wash wisely

Nearly 90 percent of the energy used for clothes

washing goes to heating the water for a wash cycle. To help cut back on energy consumption, wash clothes in hot water only when necessary, and always wash and dry full loads of laundry. When drying, try to dry heavy towels in a load separate from lighter items, clean your lint trap after every cycle, and air dry clothes whenever possible.

You can also save money by using your dishwasher more efficiently. Fill your dishwasher before starting a load, but be careful not to overfill. You can also let your dishes air dry by turning off the dishwasher after the final rinse cycle. Try opening the door to help the dishes dry a little faster.

Being green isn't always about spending money. While new technologies are doing a lot to help reduce waste and utilize energy more efficiently, you can start small and save big by incorporating these simple changes into your daily routine.

For more information about energy reduction, visit the U.S. Department of Energy website: www.energy.gov.



Caring Families are Needed!



Alec

Born October 26, 1997

Although he can be described as bold and energetic, Alec has a quiet side and he enjoys immersing himself in a great book for hours on end. And just as books and reading are an important escape for him, so is hanging out with his friends. Being a social pre-teen with an outgoing personality means Alec is never at a loss for buddies.

Alec is quite talented at video games, including his all-time favorite, "Grand Theft Auto." You might also be lucky enough to hear him honing his singing skills, another of his hidden talents. This eager young man has a strong desire to enter the military after high school.

A relaxed and laid-back family would be a fabulous match for Alec. This great kid would benefit tremendously from a family who will devote their time and attention to him.

**To learn more about Alec and others available for adoption,
Please call 513-632-6366 or visit www.hckids.org.**



Please post "Hello Hamilton County," so everyone can see what's going on!

Hello Hamilton County is published monthly. It is designed to inform citizens and employees about news and events related to Hamilton County government and our community in general. You can find current and archived editions on the County's website. If you have questions, suggestions, or article submissions, please contact Laura Maus.

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