

Recently, I had the opportunity to visit the Capitol and White House for a couple of days. It's been 10 years since I've been there, and while obviously a lot is the same, there has been tremendous change and expansion since my last visit. I was impressed as well as somewhat frustrated with the amount of bureaucracy. I am a firm believer, the more you can control locally, the more efficient it becomes. We have another opportunity in this great country to cast our ballot on March 17 and have a voice in the future of our county, state and country. I can't stress enough the importance of voting for candidates that encourage personal responsibility, support the constitution and believe big government is unhealthy for all. God continue to bless our great country.

I want to emphasize two important events coming up in our Village. Both of these events are on our website but if you haven't seen them, I want you to be aware of the UH/Middlefield Health Fair being held this Saturday, Feb. 29 at the UH Medical Offices on East High Street and the Cardinal Schools Business Building also on East High from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. You can pre-register by calling UH at 440-834-2124 for screenings for Lower Vascular, Hernia and Carotid Artery. In addition, they will provide testing for blood pressure, sugar, cholesterol, bone density and wellness screenings. I encourage adults of all ages to take advantage of this event.

The second event: the Village is sponsoring a workshop explaining the benefits of investing in opportunity zones. This event is being held at the Middlefield Library on March 19 from 9:30 a.m. till noon. President Trump spoke of this initiative during the State of the Union address this past month. This program is one of the "great initiatives" which will spur positive business development and employment. Our Village administrator, Leslie Gambosi-McCoy, successfully had property in our Village and township designated as Opportunity Zones. Invitations to this event were sent to those who own property and businesses in this area. I encourage those invited to attend or send a representative as this will be two and one-half hours well spent.

We also held our kickoff meeting on Jan. 31 for our Transportation Improvement Plan. The goals of this study are to provide a plan that will improve all areas of logistics within the Village. These areas will include encouraging more walkability, enhance Amish travel, determine future land use areas to encourage improved connectivity and general efficiency of all modes of transportation within the Village. This study was made possible through a grant also secured by our Village Administrator.

Our 2019 annual report was completed and presented at our February council meeting. All areas of measurement are showing positive results. Expenses are being controlled and income is improving because of steady growth. The future of our Village is positive, and we look forward to a very rewarding year.

I am going to add an element to my tag line. I think it is important to be respectful of your neighbors. Please maintain your property and conduct yourself to prevent negatively impacting your neighbor's life or property values.

The new tag line is "be informed, be involved, respect your neighbors, exercise your right to vote, shop Middlefield and visit [middlefieldohio.com](http://middlefieldohio.com).

*Ben Garlich*

Mayor  
Village of Middlefield