

## Eight Things to Know About Tax Increment Financing

Columbia Township benefits from this economic development mechanism

### 1) What is a TIF?

Tax Increment Financing (TIF) is an economic development mechanism available to local governments in Ohio. It is used to finance public infrastructure improvements and, in certain circumstances, residential rehabilitation.

A TIF works by locking in the taxable worth of real property at the value it holds at the time the authorizing legislation was approved. Payments derived from the increased assessed value of any improvement to real property beyond that amount are directed towards a separate fund to finance the construction of public infrastructure defined within the TIF legislation. One fact to note: TIFs are NOT tax abatements. Property owners pay full taxation and schools are compensated.

### 2) How many TIFs does Columbia Township have and what are they?

Columbia Township has five TIFs currently; National City Bank (Ridge Road), CBT (Ridge Road), Ridge Development (Ridge Road), Columbia

MOB (Lucille Drive-UC Health) and 7510 Wooster Pike.

### 3) How does a TIF benefit the township?

**A TIF:**

- Provides new infrastructure improvements;
- Can help demolish or renovate distressed property;
- Helps repay bonds issued;
- Helps provide enhanced services;
- Provides environmental clean-up and more.



### 4) How does a TIF benefit residents?

TIFs help bring in new business and revenue to the community that keeps taxes down; job opportunities; improved infrastructure.

### 5) How does a TIF benefit businesses?

Provides long term financing of property/building improvements; helps overcome hurdles preventing businesses from committing to a building project

### 6) How do schools receive funds from the TIF?

The township negotiates with the involved school district to pay a percentage of revenue generated by the TIF to help make up for lost revenue to the school district.

### 7) How is a TIF paid out?

A taxpayer whose operations are located within a TIF continues to make payments to the jurisdiction in an amount equal to the real property tax liability that otherwise would have been due had the property not been exempted. These payments in lieu of taxes, or service payments, are collected by the county treasurer in the same manner as real property taxes but are deposited into separate public improvement tax increment equivalent funds of the township.

### 8) How long does a TIF last?

TIFs can last up to 30 years under conditions prescribed by the Ohio Revised Code, but the term is negotiated between the community and the business.

## Important Phone Numbers in Columbia Township



Trustee President  
**David Kubicki**  
272-7870  
dkubicki@columbiatwp.org



Trustee  
**Susan Hughes**  
272-7872  
shughes@columbiatwp.org



Trustee Vice-President  
**Chris Kritikos**  
272-7871  
ckritikos@columbiatwp.org



Fiscal Officer  
**Caroline Heekin**  
272-7867  
cheekin@columbiatwp.org

## Township Administration

Administrator  
**C. Michael Lemon**  
561-6046  
MLemon@columbiatwp.org

Administrative Assistant  
**Kimberly Gray**  
272-7877  
Kgray@columbiatwp.org

JEDZ Tax Administrator  
**Jane Fette**  
272-9954  
JFette@fairfaxoh.org

Property Maintenance Code Enforcement  
792-7256  
columbia@sycamoretownship.org

# the Voice

SUMMER 2019

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## First Columbia Township Medical Marijuana Dispensary Could Open in This Month

Verilife Dispensary on Ridge Avenue Says It Will Focus on 'Patient-Centered Care'

One of the two Hamilton County medical marijuana dispensaries approved for Columbia Township could be open to the public soon.

The build out on the new Verilife store, 5431 Ridge Avenue, is almost complete, with the company now waiting on final approval from the state of Ohio Board of Pharmacy, which governs Ohio's medical cannabis program.

Melissa Merse, assistant general manager of Verilife, said once approved, the store will be open six days a week and employ 10 people. Hours are 11-7 p.m. Monday through Friday and Saturday 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. While she said expected sales projections are "unknown," she noted the company estimates it will see at least 200 patients a day. The closest dispensary currently open is in Lebanon, Ohio.

The new dispensary will feature a wide range of products and brands, from vaporizers and edibles to tinctures and oils. The airy contemporary-styled building has set aside a large measure of accessible public space to be used



for private patient consultations rooms and personal access to patient care representatives. Rooms containing the cannabis products are not open to the public without a registered medical marijuana patient card.

Chaz Mize, general manager of the Verilife dispensary, said in a release the company is "looking forward to meeting the medical cannabis needs of Ohio's

patients seeking relief." Patients may be seeking relief from chronic pain, may be looking for help from chemotherapy's after-effects or could struggle to find a solution to deal with pain from fibromyalgia, the release said. Merse noted that some 70 percent of Ohio's qualified medical marijuana patients are aged 40 and over.

Continued on page 2

## Keeping it Green with Help from Township Arborists



Two certified arborists, who are also fulltime employees of the road crew in Columbia Township, do their part each week to help keep Columbia Township green.

As a part of the Tree City USA program, Columbia Township cares for its approximately 750 street trees. The two arborists make sure trees

are trimmed correctly, dead trees are removed, and new trees are planted appropriately. Columbia Township has been a Tree City USA community for the last 11 years.

Road Superintendent John Servizzi notes that Columbia Township stands out among other Ohio townships in the fact that it has the two certified arborists on

Continued on page 3

## Meet the Commander- Peter Enderle



District Commander Peter Enderle

**A** District Commander Peter Enderle is a 22-year veteran of the Hamilton County Sheriff's Office who currently serves in District Four, covering Columbia Township and the village of Silverton.

Columbia Township has eight officers assigned to keep the streets safe, patrolling in six township-owned patrol cars. Deputies work out of District Four's headquarters in the Silverton administration building. When extra manpower or specialized police services are needed for issues in Columbia Township, the Hamilton County Sheriff's Office can supply the need through its

Criminal Investigation Section, the Traffic Safety Unit, the Hazardous Devices Unit or the Aviation Unit and other resources.

Enderle is not a stranger in Columbia Township, as he previously served as the Columbia Township liaison officer in 2007 and 2008 while he was a sergeant. He began his career as a patrol clerk, working his way through the ranks of patrol officer, corporal, and sergeant. As a Lieutenant, he served as a Night Watch Commander, in the Sheriff's Office Training Section and Support Operations and as the Lincoln Heights Area Commander before moving to District 4.

As commander, Enderle said he oversees the daily operation of District 4 and serves as a liaison between the township and the Sheriff's Office. "The

daily operations include personnel, operational needs (vehicles, supplies), responding to critical incidents and coordinating with specialized units like Criminal Investigations/Hazardous Devices Unit/Bomb Squad and SWAT, to name a few,"

he said. Commanders also provide township officials with information on criminal activity and notify them of any major incidents that occur, he said.

The good news is that Columbia Township's crime rate is relatively low, especially in the area of violent and personal crimes, with most criminal activity being larcenies including theft and shoplifting, Enderle said.

"I'm very happy to once again be serving the people of Columbia Township," he said.

## Medical Marijuana Dispensary *(Continued from cover)*

The site will offer weekly public educational sessions for the public, Merse said. She noted that patients will be encouraged to keep a journal to see which products provide the most relief and in what forms. "We want to ensure our patients are empowered to find what works to meaningfully improve their lives," Mize said.

David Kubicki, president of the Board of Trustees, expressed appreciation for the community outreach program of Verilife. "Its staff has been cleaning and maintaining the flower beds in the Ridge and Highland business district as well

as picking up trash," Kubicki said. "It has even approached the trustees about assisting with maintenance of several homes of people with limitations or



disabilities. This is commendable and a great way to establish a relationship with the community," he said.

Four stores were approved in 2018 in Hamilton County, including the Verilife store, which is run by PharmaCann, founded in 2014. The other Columbia Township store is to be operated by Care Med Associates at 5149 Kennedy Ave. The State of Ohio Board of Pharmacy and the Ohio Department of Commerce govern the implementation of the medical marijuana program in Ohio. Fifty-six provisional licenses were approved for operation in Ohio.

## Vacationing? Tips for Home Safety While You Are Gone

Planning to head out of town anytime soon? If so, here are some important safety reminders from the Hamilton County Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency.

- Avoid posting about being away from home on social media. Posting pictures and information about being away could make you a target for theft.
- Choose a spot where your family can meet if separated. Choose an easily-found, well-lit place.
- Keep lights in your home on a timer to give the appearances someone is home.
- Have a trusted family member, neighbor or friend check on your home and pick up newspapers. Have mail service temporarily stopped.

Residents can also request Hamilton County Sheriff's Office deputies check their residence while away on vacation by calling patrol headquarters at 825-1500, or District Four at 936-6220.



## New Businesses in Columbia Township Patron

### Mexican Grill a Family-Owned Restaurant

Offering traditional Tex-Mex food choices, the Patron Mexican Grill opened in June in the Mariemont Promenade, 7227 Wooster Pike.

The restaurant offers a full menu of spicy choices, Door Dash, lunch specials and all-day Happy Hour discounts.

The family-owned business is open Monday through Thursday 11 a.m. to 10 p.m., Friday and Saturday from 11 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. and Sunday noon to 9 p.m.

Call 954-0026 for information or email Patron's at: [info@patronmexicangrilloh.com](mailto:info@patronmexicangrilloh.com).

### HomeBuys Coming This Fall

A new HomeBuys store, which is a value-driven home goods retailer, may be open as soon as mid-September in the old Rempke location, 3240 Highland Ave., next to Lowe's.

Categories such as party goods, home decor, domestics, wine, gourmet foods and furniture are planned for the store, with advertised savings from 30-70 percent. Karen Waldmann, president of HomeBuys, said the Ohio-based company started in 2016 and plans an aggressive expansion strategy in the next few years. The Highland Avenue facility will be 54,000 square feet of "opportunity buys," she said, and its opening will create 30-50 jobs, depending on the season.

HomeBuys also operates several stores in Columbus, Dayton and Canton and plans three new stores this year, including the one in Columbia Township and one in Florence, Kentucky.

### Carriage House Car Wash Open Since May

Advertised as "Cincinnati's most advanced car wash," the Carriage House Car Wash opened recently at 7489 Wooster Pike in Columbia Township featuring a luxury car wash.

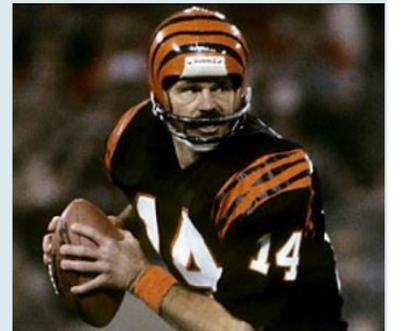
The service offers a clean, bright environment and utilizes high-end wash equipment. Other amenities include a drive-on conveyor belt loading system, a family-friendly customer lounge, free self-service vacuums and cleaning products, and a simple-to-use app for pre-booking and payment.

Carriage House also invests in local communities through a give-back promise including making donations to local schools to and fundraising for non-profits. Hours are 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. with expanded hours 24/7 beginning in September. Learn more at [CarriageHouseCarWash.com](http://CarriageHouseCarWash.com).

### Tailgate with Ken Anderson on September 8

**D**on't miss the Columbia Township Bengals Tailgate Party, with master of ceremonies Ken Anderson, set for the first game of the season on Sunday, Sept. 8.

Festivities are hosted at the old fire house at 6904 Murray Ave, starting at 2 p.m. Enjoy music, TVs, beer, food and more, plus an opportunity to hear Anderson share and answer questions. He also will be signing autographs.



## Township Arborists *(Continued from cover)*



Dustin Frazier



Jim Groen

staff, and "that saves us a lot of money since we are not hiring folks to look at trees" when there are problems.

Road crew team members Jim Groen and Dustin Frazier earned their arborist certification by taking classes at night on their own time, noted Servizzi. "Their assistance and knowledge has saved a lot of money for the township, as we can now follow their advice when we need to

remove diseased or dead trees along our roads, and when we have to determine what kind of tree to plant in certain conditions,"

While arborists cannot do work for township residents, Servizzi said they can serve as informal advisors to residents who have a question about their trees. The township also contracted with an urban forester who created a "pallet" of tree choices that are appropriate for Columbia Township

neighborhoods. Being an urban area, the trees need a good salt tolerance and should be smaller in stature to work in tandem with Duke Energy's needs to maintain their lines without excessive tree trimming, noted Administrator Mike Lemon. The arborists also help discuss Duke's needs with residents when issues arise over tree trimming, he added.

Servizzi said he is proud of his team, because with the continued street tree maintenance, "We have not had a street tree go down in a windstorm, and no insurance claims, in seven to eight years." That speaks to the township's ability to manage and monitor its trees with help from its own staff, Servizzi said.

Groen and Frazier maintain their certification by completely continuing education classes each year.

"So, out of four people on our road crew staff, two are arborists," Servizzi said. "They have saved us time and headaches. It has been a worthwhile investment to pay for their certification and training."

As part of the Tree City USA program, Columbia Township works each year to meet four standards of sound urban forestry management principles related to its public tree canopy.