

THE GRIFFIN REPORT

Serving the Buckeye, East 93rd, Fairfax, Larchmere, Little Italy, Slavic Village & Woodland Hills Neighborhoods

Time to respond to the 2020 Census is running out

The deadline to complete the Census is September 30!

We have to increase our Census responses. This is the most important message that I have for you today. This determines federal resources. The Fairfax, Buckeye and Woodland Hills areas have some of the lowest response rates in the region. This will tremendously impact our ability to get **funding for housing, roads, schools, healthcare and other essential support for**

our community. This is extremely important. By Law, your information is protected. Nobody can share your information.

Please call, go on-line or simply take a picture of this QR code to fill out your census now. We need you. Our future depends on you.

– Councilman Blaine A. Griffin

GET COUNTED NOW!

www.my2020census.gov

BE SURE TO COUNT EVERYONE AT YOUR ADDRESS!

This includes relatives, nonrelatives, people staying only temporarily and children as young as one day old.



Top 6 Ways Census Data is Used in the City of Cleveland

- 1 IDEA**
Decision making at all levels of government.
- 2 BRAINSTORM**
Forecasting future transportation needs for all segments of the population.
- 3 PLAN**
Planning health and educational services for people with disabilities.
- 4 PROJECT**
Determining areas eligible for housing assistance and rehabilitation loans.
- 5 BUSINESS**
Reapportioning seats in the House of Representatives.
- 6 SUCCESS**
Directing funds for services for people in poverty.

Engage with Councilman BLAINE A. GRIFFIN:

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#ILoveWard6

A Message from Councilman Griffin

Yoda: "Fear is the path to the Dark Side. Fear Leads to Anger. Anger Leads to Hate. Hate Leads to Suffering."

2020 has been a tough and exhausting year that we will never forget.

Fear, hate, racism, ignorance and indifference has led to too much suffering. This has caused our community, city, state and country to experience some unprecedented, catastrophic and stressful events. **We have experienced a once in a lifetime pandemic with COVID-19.** Racial strife and civil unrest has erupted in our city and across the country due to police brutality. We have seen a surge in violent crime and nuisance activity. In addition to this, our national, state and local economy is on life support. People are suffering from depression, discontent and disappointment.

I have a message for you today. We must not allow the politics of fear to paralyze us or define our community, our city or our nation. We are dealing with extreme polarization in our society right now. This has filtered down to our communities and is impacting the average person as if he or she were an innocent bystander caught in the crossfire. **I refuse to succumb to the politics of fear that permeates our national, state and local discussions.** I know that 2020 has presented



Black Lives Mural on E. 93rd Street. See article on page 3. Photo credit: Gabe Torok

us with some significant challenges that have affected our health, safety and quality of life. I am fighting on your behalf to alleviate this tremendous burden we are all experiencing every day. I got into government to present solutions to complicated problems and not just complain about them. That's why **I utilize my position to give the administration the resources and tools it needs to provide quality services.** I also use this platform to hold city departments accountable when they do not provide those services through Council's oversight authority.

Let's not let a good crisis go to waste. I am confident that we will get through this because Clevelanders are tough, resilient and tenacious. Let's use this time as an **"Inflection Point."** Let's come out of this crisis mentally, physically and spiritually better as individuals and a community. I hope you take the time to read this publication of The Griffin Report to hear about some of the legislation and activities that I have led or supported to improve our quality of life. As always, #ILoveWard6 #ILoveCle.

Blaine A. Griffin
Councilman Blaine Griffin, Ward 6

GRIFFIN'S Legislative Notes

Resolution Declaring Racism as a Public Health Crisis:

I sponsored, passed and lead a resolution to declare "Racism a Public Health Crisis." Why did I do this? Per CDC guidelines, when you declare something a public health crisis, you have to outline specific steps to eliminate or mitigate the crisis. **Many communities of color have been marginalized because we've never recovered from slavery, Jim Crow Laws, Redlining, mass incarceration, abandonment, disinvestment and other government sanctioned policies.**

Being a Descendant of Slaves, I must always shed a light on the injustices we have experienced as a people. Although many ethnic groups have persevered through their challenges, the American Dream has been elusive to Descendants of Slaves that look like me.

The next step in this process is to work with legacy civil rights organizations like the Urban League, NAACP, YWCA, United Way, First Year Cleveland and Case Western Reserve University and many other organizations to examine to examine government, private non-profit policies that promote racism. **We plan to address racism in:**

Health Disparities

- Address Barriers to Healthy Communities and the Social Determinants of Health
- Access to Healthcare

Housing/Infrastructure/Environment

- Create more safe and affordable housing options
- Examine Lending Policies of Banks (Are we experiencing modern day redlining?)
- Create better access to parks and recreation

- Address the Digital Divide and promote broad band internet access.

Education

- Close the Achievement Gap
- Better Access to training and certifications and create better career pathways.

Workforce and Wealth Creation

- Connect residents with Demand Driven Jobs
- Create Wealth in our community

Criminal Justice Reform

- Police Reform
- Bail Reform
- Reentry Initiatives

We will take a look at the boards and commissions that provide resources to our community to make sure we increase minority and community representation. We will not focus this effort on solely on government reform. We will also challenge the private sector to examine and change their policies if they are deemed to promote racism and inequity. The City and government cannot solve these issues on our own. We all have a role to play to make our community more prosperous by promoting equity and eradicating racist social and economic policies.

Healthy Drinks Legislation:

I sponsored and passed this legislation to make it easier for parents and kids to make healthy dietary choices by offering milk, water or 100% juice as a default drink option when



ordering a "children's meal." Parents will still have the option of providing a soda or other drink to their children. However, they will have to request it. We want to change culture and encourage healthier eating habits. This ordinance was crafted with the help of the American Heart Association, Neighborhood Leadership Institute (NLI), Ohio Restaurants Association, Ohio Beverage Association and the milk and beverage producers. This is an example of how to bring groups who often have different views to the table to do what is right for our children.

Small Business Support:

I have worked hard to make sure we support small businesses and restaurants during this crisis. City Council passed an ordinance to expand outdoor patios so restaurants can spread out their customers and practice safe physical and social distancing. **Seventeen (17) businesses have received \$10,000 low interest loans with reasonable payment plan.** We had to cancel many festivals this year that are essential to these businesses remaining open. Please shop local and support your small businesses.

Congratulations to Joy and Tim



Joy D. Johnson



Tim Tramble

Ward 6 and Buckeye area resident, **Joy D. Johnson** for being named the Executive Director of the Burten Bell Carr Development Corporation. Joy replaces another Ward 6 resident, **Tim Tramble** who has now become the President and CEO of the Saint Luke's Foundation.

These are two proud Ward 6 residents running two critical institutions in our neighborhood.

I will always Stand for Safety

I am not in favor of "Defunding the Police."

An overwhelming majority of my colleagues and the Mayor are not in favor of "Defunding the Police." We need more police not less. My only expectation out of the CDP and any law enforcement agency is that they provide constitutionally protected policing and 21st Century policing.

I received hundreds of calls about this issue. There are a few that would like us to redirect resources. Most of those emails came from individuals who live outside of our city. **An overwhelming majority of the residents in Ward 6 and Cleveland called and sent emails pleading with me not to "Defund the Police."** I respect everyone's opinion but it has never crossed my mind to "Defund the Police." There is no such effort underway at City Hall.

I am in favor of investing more in poor and minority communities and I do believe we should provide more mental health and social services for at risk people. But I do not believe we need to "Defund the Police" to achieve this.

I've met with the local U.S. Attorney, Justin Herdman. He has given me his word that this will not be like Portland where unidentified law enforcement officials descended upon the city and arrested people suspected of unlawful activities. I do not support those activities and I believe they are not lawful. I do believe we need the support of federal assets from the ATF, FBI, U.S. Marshall, Adult Parole Authority and other federal agencies

to address violent crime and large scale drug trafficking. We have a 44% increase in violent crime so far this year. This is unacceptable.

I am also extremely frustrated and upset at the lawlessness, nuisance activity and misery index being caused by a few people with no regard for us-their neighbors. I know you are angry too. I hear the frustration in your voice everyday. The house parties, loud music and public gatherings are out of control. The speeding, illegal parking and parking on lawns is destroying the quality of life for many of us.

We are taking action on these issues. I refuse to sit idly by and watch a few people ruin it for the rest of us. I keep a list of all of these hot spots. I have asked Commander's Kutz (D-4) and Todd (D-3) to be extremely vigilant in utilizing all the tools at their disposal to address these nuisance activities. Cleveland City Council has also asked for the Ohio State Highway Patrol (OSHP) to help with these traffic efforts.

We have to create a higher level of expectation for our neighborhood. People with a total disregard for the law need to be held accountable. If this pertains to you, I hope you deal with your tenants and or family members to reign in this activity. If this does not pertain to you, please call the Police to establish a record of calls. from you and your neighbors. It does make a difference. That is how police resources are deployed.

– **Councilman Blaine A. Griffin**

First Presidential Debate Comes to Cleveland's Ward 6

The first presidential debate of this election season will be in Cleveland, specifically our own Ward 6. The Commission on Presidential Debates has chosen the Sheila and Eric Samson Pavilion on the Cleveland Clinic and Case Western Reserve University campus for the first debate between Donald Trump and Joe Biden.

It is with a sense of pride that the debate will

be held right in our back yard, as we soak up the national spotlight. However, I do have concerns.

This debate almost certainly will draw protesters from both ends of the political spectrum. And I am a firm believer in anyone's right to protest. But let me make this clear - any harm to person or property is unacceptable and won't be tolerated.

I am in the process of getting regular updates from Case, the Cleveland Clinic and law enforcement officials on plans to keep our communities safe. I will be on the ground throughout this entire process.

I encourage everyone to light up your homes and businesses during the debate as a show of solidarity. We are sending a message that we will not tolerate lawlessness in our neighborhoods.

Now is the time to get ready to VOTE!

STEP 1: MAKE SURE YOU ARE REGISTERED BY MONDAY, OCTOBER 5!

- Go to <http://voterlookup.ohiosos.gov>
- Need help? Call Board of Elections at 216-443-8683

STEP 2: WANT TO VOTE BY MAIL? REQUEST ABSENTEE BALLOT NOW!

- Call Board of Elections at 216-443-8683 or
- Access the [Vote-by-Mail Ballot Application](http://www.443vote.com) online at <http://www.443vote.com>
- Print, complete, sign and mail the Ballot Application to: Cuyahoga County Board of Elections, PO Box 89448, Cleveland, OH 44101-6448
- Track your request at <https://www.ohiosos.gov/elections/voters/toolkit/>
- Wait to receive your ballot in the mail. Ballots will be sent out starting Tuesday, OCTOBER 6



ELECTION DAY IS TUESDAY NOVEMBER 3, 2020

STEP 3: COMPLETE AND RETURN ABSENTEE BALLOT PROMPTLY!

- Avoid mail delays - Mail completed ballot in provided envelope as soon as you finish it or by Monday, OCTOBER 19
- Final accepted postmark - Monday, NOVEMBER 2
- Worried about the mail? USE THE 24 HOUR DROP BOX at the Board of Elections, 2925 Euclid Ave. by 7:30pm, Tuesday, NOVEMBER 3
- Need a RIDE TO THE Board of Elections? Call: 216-801-1101

STEP 4: WANT TO VOTE IN PERSON? PLEASE CONSIDER EARLY VOTING!

- WHEN: Tuesday, OCTOBER 6 through Monday, NOVEMBER 2. Visit www.443vote.com for times.
- WHERE: Board of Elections, 2925 Euclid Ave.
- Need a RIDE TO THE Board of Elections? Call 216-801-1101.

BUCKEYE • EAST 93RD • FAIRFAX • LARCHMERE

SUPPORT your Local BUSINESSES

Unfortunately, many community festivals and events were cancelled this year due to Covid-19. Ward 6 shops and restaurants, however are still open for business. Be sure to patronize them!
#ILoveWard6

LITTLE ITALY • SLAVIC VILLAGE • WOODLAND HILLS

COMMUNITY Highlights



The Ward 6 Check Up and Check In AUGUST 8, 2020

This drive-thru event offered COVID-19 Testing, Census Outreach and Voter Registration. Guests received swag bags filled with donated items and fresh fruits and vegetables from the Greater Cleveland Food Bank. Music was provided by WOJU. Special thanks to Greater Cleveland Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Care Alliance, Jarvis Gibson Foundation and Burten Bell Carr.



Young Millionaires

Thank you the Rain Burnside (A Touch of Rain Nail Spa), her daughter, Rhain McMichael (Royal Tees and Kid's Style Lounge) and all the "Young Millionaires" Entrepreneurs who registered their businesses to become LLC's. They recently organized an extraordinary bazaar on Larchmere Blvd. I'd also like to thank The Polished Professionals Barbershop and all the merchants and residents who came out to support these young entrepreneurs.



ABOVE: Event organizer Rhain McMichael with Councilman Griffin.

A Magical Moment on East 93rd Street

We saw a magical moment this summer with the painting of the giant "Black Lives Matter" mural on the pavement of East 93rd Street. Many people have asked me why I selected that street for the public art project. And my reason is that for too many years that area of the city has been neglected.

We still have unsolved murders in that neighborhood. Many families have lost loved ones to senseless violence on that street, including a precious child we will never forget.

Also, we are still upset about police violence that we've witnessed this summer and throughout the years. The Black Lives Matter mural was never about an organization. We are talking about our lives and the lives of our fellow citizens. No matter what you think about the organization and the activities that are associated with the movement, please realize that we are all



frustrated and tired of seeing so many unarmed Black men die at the hands of people we support to protect us. We need fundamental change and courage to address this problem that has brought America to a tipping point.

The painting of the giant street message was an extremely proud moment for the residents of the East 93rd Corridor. Many people came back to the old neighborhood to see the mural. People from all races, colors and creeds came to see this inspiring art work. Folks came from as far as Florida, California and Washington, D.C., to look and take pictures.

But what was most magical, was watching the residents working hand in hand with the artists to create something special. I would like to thank the residents and businesses for being patient while we closed E.93rd for more than 6 weeks to create a Black Lives Matter Plaza. I would especially like to thank "Mo" and his family at the Sunoco Gas Station for being so patient during this time. This community will never forget this moment.



Congrats Marilyn Burns on becoming the 2020 Ward 6 "Senior of the Year"

Ms. Burns is a very good friend who is always there for the community. She cooks community meals, is a part of many leadership committees in the area and serves as the Ward 6 Precinct Committee Person. She is also attends school and serves as a mentor to many CWRU students.



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**COVID-19 is still here.
PLEASE, WEAR A MASK!**

THE GRIFFIN REPORT



WARD 6 COUNCILMAN

Blaine A. Griffin

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United States® Census 2020

Responding only takes a few minutes!



ONLINE
my2020census.gov



BY PHONE
Call 844-330-2020,
Sunday through Saturday,
from 7:00 am to 2:00 am



BY MAIL
Return the form you
received in April.

**Please respond
to Census 2020
by Sept. 30.**

Be sure to count everyone
at your address, even
if they are staying only
temporarily. This includes
relatives, nonrelatives,
and children as young as
one day old.



Road Improvements & Infrastructure Announcements



- **Union Ave. is scheduled to get repaved from Kinsman to Broadway beginning in 2021.** We've had two community meetings via Zoom on these road projects. We are encouraging a multi-module and shared mobility design. This will allow the implementation of bike lanes and reduce speed and traffic calming.
- **Buckeye Rd. is scheduled to begin design soon with the goal of repaving it in 2022.** Sidewalks on side streets that are paved, get inspected and damaged sidewalks are repaired the following year after a street is paved.

Shovels are in the ground and cranes are in the air in Ward 6



121 LARCHMERE GROUND BREAKING

June 23, 2020 - A four-story mid-rise with 64,000 square feet for apartments and about 6,500 square feet of ground-floor office space fronting Larchmere.

MICROS UNITS ON LARCHMERE

This is a picture of a new 28 Unit Development that will be coming soon to 12607 Larchmere Blvd. These will be modeled after wildly popular Micros Units in Europe and many East Coast Cities.



The City of Cleveland is examining ways to support long time "Legacy Residents" with housing needs.

The city of Cleveland's Department of Community Development has undertaken, with outside consultants, a comprehensive study to understand the **impact of tax abatements on the Cleveland community and residents.**

They've held community meetings to understand if there are concerns with the current program. Finally, they are working to identify programmatic and policy adjustments. Cleveland City Council recently heard a presentation on the efforts.

Cleveland's tax abatement program is designed to encourage new housing development by waiving a portion of a resident's new property taxes for a set period -- 15 years. Read more at www.clevelandcitycouncil.org.

Recently, council heard a report on the Cleveland's **Middle Neighborhoods study.**

Community Development is working with experts to develop strategies to address the unique needs of these communities.

This work has focused on three areas: (1) research and analysis to identify not only middle neighborhoods but to analyze all neighborhood markets in the city; (2) work with local and national partners to evaluate and develop interventions for Cleveland's markets; and (3) provide a long term strategy for the City of Cleveland and its partners to stabilize these neighborhoods and build toward strength. Read more at www.clevelandcitycouncil.org.

Heritage Home Program is a home repair program provided by the Cleveland Restoration Society and City of Cleveland. This program provides low interest loans with rates as low as 14%. Please contact Jessica Bean at 216-426-3116 or jessica.bean@clevelandrestoration.org.



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CITY OF CLEVELAND
Mayor Frank C. Jackson



"Kickin' It With Kenny" in Little Italy

In August, Councilman Griffin joined Fox 8's Kenny Crumpton as he visited the historic Little Italy neighborhood. They visited several local establishments in the popular dining and arts destination located in Ward 6. Pictured, from left to right are Councilman Griffin, Kenny Crumpton, Ray Kristosik - Little Italy Redevelopment Corporation Executive Director, La Dolce Vita owner Terry Tarrantino and Basil Russo.