



## Mayor Ravenstahl's Monthly Community Newsletter

January 2013

MAYOR RAVENSTAHL'S MONTHLY COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

Dear Neighbors,

It's been another fantastic year for the City of Pittsburgh! We've had more Third Renaissance development, a growing population and remain one of the world's Most Livable Cities. Let's take a look back at 2012's top accomplishments. With strong partnerships and positive momentum, Pittsburgh's resurgence is poised to continue across the City in 2013.

I hope you enjoy reflecting on the year's successes and I wish you a safe, joyous and blessed New Year.

### **Top 10 of 2012**

10. Getting Greener and Saving Green
9. Powering Up More Innovation
8. Downtown on the Move
7. Safer Streets – Again
6. It's Official: We're Growing
5. Premiere-Ready Pittsburgh
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3. First G-20, then One Young World
2. Pittsburgh Reigns as One of the World's Most Livable Cities
1. Pittsburgh's Third Renaissance Extends its Reach

Sincerely,

Luke Ravenstahl  
Mayor, City of Pittsburgh

## 10. Getting Greener and Saving Green

The year 2012 marked two milestone environmental improvement projects. First, we began and completed **\$3.4 million in energy-efficient upgrades** to our historic, 100-year-old City-County Building. Thanks to a competitive federal grant that paid for the entire project, these improvements to lighting, heating and cooling will **save taxpayers about a half-million dollars a year** in reduced energy costs, while reducing our carbon footprint –

something we call “green for green.” In addition, we completed the first phase of our **LED Streetlight Conversion Project**. Dozens of local business districts now have LED streetlights, which promote safety with brighter lighting and significantly reduce energy costs. Also In 2012, vacant lots throughout the City were transformed into community gardens and green spaces, and our environmental services fleet welcomed new waste



haulers that run on clean-burning (and less costly) natural gas.

## 9. Powering Up More Innovation

If we're going to keep **growing and improving**, we have to keep raising the bar. Working with university and business leaders, we launched **PowerUp Pittsburgh**, an initiative that improves collaboration between local government and the start-up sectors to create more jobs. In 2012, I directed the City's Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) to create the City's first department that focuses solely on leveraging Pittsburgh's burgeoning high-tech and innovation climate to **create more jobs**. This governmental office, called the **Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship**, makes sure that local government and the innovation and technology

communities collaborate as much as possible to support entrepreneurs. As part of this collaboration, we welcomed the City's first-ever Innovation and Entrepreneurship Manager. Working with Google, Carnegie Mellon and others, we are leading the effort to create our first competitive ‘app’ contest, called the Steel City Codefest, to be hosted this February.



## 8. Downtown On the Move

The year 2012 marked another great year for **Downtown development**. PNC began constructing its \$400 million "green" skyscraper and we welcomed new businesses - and of course new residents. In addition, we collaborated with stakeholders to launch a plan to attract more retail development, turned Saks department store into an opportunity and began the renovation of historic structures along Wood Street. Our **Project Pop Up: Downtown** initiative has been successful beyond belief - converting a dozen vacant storefronts into quirky, fun and innovative art and retail displays and recently winning an international award for improvements in public spaces.

## 7. Safer Streets – Again

This past year, we experienced our **6th year of 40-year historically low crime rates**. Our crime **continues to decrease** at a higher rate than in cities of comparable size and scope, but we have to keep working hard to ensure that every neighborhood block is safe. That's why we launched more community-oriented policing initiatives in 2012 - an effort to drive down crime even lower. Our **Block Watch in a Box** toolkit provides information and resources to help communities create effective and sustainable safety watch programs, or re-energize ones that already exist. Our Neighborhood Camera System is deployed throughout the City, and we installed more cameras in more business districts. We've made historic investments to modernize and improve the Bureau of Police, with millions invested in 2012 to buy new patrol cars and

## 6. It's Official: We're Growing

Last year, U.S. Census data showed that for the first time in a long time our City was getting younger, with more 24-29 year olds living in Pittsburgh. While that news supported our efforts to keep the “brain gain” flowing from our universities, our population still wasn't officially “growing.” Well, almost 30 years since our City's economy hit its lowest point, I am thrilled to say that we are **officially a growing City!** In the most recent U.S. Census report, Pittsburgh gained population. Thanks to **The Pittsburgh Promise scholarship program** - which has helped 3,800 students pursue higher education, more urban living opportunities and a growing economy - Pittsburgh's population growth between 2010 and 2011 even surpassed our surrounding suburban areas.



## 5. Premiere – Ready Pittsburgh

Tom Cruise confessed to falling in love with Pittsburgh when he was here filming “Jack Reacher” in fall 2010. It’s not only Pittsburgh’s excitement and beauty, but our talented workforce and the hospitality of local residents and businesses that led Cruise and Paramount Pictures to select Pittsburgh to host the movie’s U.S. premiere. While the red carpet extravaganza was downplayed out of respect for the 26 victims of the Sandy Hook Elementary tragedy, we should all be extremely proud to have **hosted our first premiere in decades.**

From “The Dark Knight Rises,” to “Perks of Being a Wallflower,” to hosting our first U.S. premiere in decades - **Pittsburgh’s mark on Hollywood is on the rise.** Thanks to the Pittsburgh Film Office’s hard work and dedication, aided greatly by the Film Tax Credit committed by Governor Corbett, Western Pennsylvania has experienced **over a half-billion dollars of investment** in the past five years due to the film industry. “Jack Reacher” alone had a \$50 million budget, most of which was pumped right here into Pittsburgh’s local economy, supporting our small businesses.



## 2. Pittsburgh Reigns as One Of the World’s Most Livable Cities

The accolades kept rolling in last year, including from the prestigious magazine, *The Economist*, which has ranked Pittsburgh a **top “most livable” city in the world** (Pittsburgh and Honolulu were the only U.S. cities to make the list). Pittsburgh was recognized as a **“Top 10 Comeback City”** by *Forbes* and touted as a great place for residents of all ages - we’re one of **“The 20 Cities with the Happiest Young Professionals”** (*Forbes.com*), one of **“10 Best Cities to Raise a Family”** (*The Street*), a **“Best City for Successful Aging”** (The Milken Institute) and the **#1 City for Veterans** (The USAA).

Pittsburgh is one of only a handful of metro regions that have **added more than 10,000 private-sector jobs** since the beginning of the recession in 2007, and one of three U.S. cities to have fully “recovered.” *Site Selection Magazine* ranked Pittsburgh No. 3 in the U.S., and first in the Northeast, for the number of new and expanded corporate facilities among metropolitan areas with more than one million people.

## 4. Improving Pittsburgh, One Volunteer at a Time

It’s been less than two years since we launched **servePGH**, a high-impact volunteer strategy that harnesses the power of our residents to improve our neighborhoods. Funded by a competitive grant awarded by Bloomberg Philanthropies, the program has grown significantly in 2012. **Thousands of residents** are now engaged **ServePGH** volunteers. They’ve participated in a number of projects, from sprucing up vacant lots, to mentoring at-risk youths, to removing litter from City streets. Most impressively, our staff has been able to leverage **over \$1 million** in federal, state and foundation funding to further the impact **servePGH** is making in our communities. In 2013, we will **launch more servePGH programs** that will create edible gardens, green City rooftops and provide more young students with mentors.



## 3. First G-20, then One Young World



Almost three years to the date of hosting what many say was the first-ever safe and successful economic summit of its kind, Pittsburgh was **handpicked to host the 2012 One Young World Summit.** Once again, the eyes of the world were upon our beautiful City as more than 1,500 future leaders from 190 countries visited Pittsburgh – making it the largest representation of countries next to the Olympics and the United Nations. **Pittsburgh became the first U.S. city to host the summit**, following in the footsteps of London and Zurich. We were thrilled and excited to showcase our beautiful City to so many young leaders from across the globe, and to have them discuss solutions to the world’s greatest challenges in a **City that is world renowned** for its innovation, hard work and “get it done” attitude.



# 1. Pittsburgh's Third Renaissance Extends its Reach

It's hard to miss the surge of development in neighborhoods like Downtown, the Strip District and the East End. As Mayor, my goal has been to make sure that this momentum is felt by **every resident in all of Pittsburgh's 90 neighborhoods**. While we are well on our way, there is still much more work to be done. Over the past six years, the URA invested \$70 million in more than 390 neighborhood small business and commercial real estate developments. This has created and retained more than 4,100 jobs and leveraged a total investment of \$400 million. Here are *a few* of those projects in a neighborhood near you - this is just a small sample of URA-supported projects.

**NORTH** – The legendary Garden Theater block, located on Federal North Street in the **Central Northside**, is being revived. In 2007, the URA acquired the vacant Garden Theater property and nearby vacant properties. Now, developers are taking interest and the block's 10 mostly vacant buildings will soon be transformed from long-time eyesores to destination restaurants and loft-style living. In 2012, leases were signed by popular restaurants such as Picola Forno. Get ready for more ribbon cuttings in 2013.

**SOUTH** – With URA support, a new grocery store in **Beechview** opened and is thriving. The Authority also helped other small businesses open nearby, including the Crested Duck Charcuterie and taco joint, Casa Rasta. In 2012, the City's Biz Buzz program provided mini-grants to support business district growth in Beechview, **Brookline** and other City neighborhoods. Soon, construction will begin on the \$6.6 million Brookline Boulevard Improvement Project, and in the **South Side** a multi-use stadium recently opened and construction on the beautiful South Shore Riverfront Park has been completed.

**EAST** – 2012 was a great year for many East End neighborhoods. Developments and projects like Bakery Square 2.0 and the East Liberty Transit Center will spur hundreds of millions of dollars in private investment in and around **East Liberty**. Other highlights include plans to turn the long-time vacant Highland Wallace Building into apartments. The URA's purchase of the 100-year-old building has resulted in the tax credits and financing needed to overcome the hurdles of historic renovation. After decades of vacancy, this building will soon see life. The Mayor's Storefront Renovation Program cleaned and beautified City storefronts, such as Kevin Sousa's Salt of the Earth restaurant in **Garfield**. In **Homewood**, construction began for new mixed-income residential units – the largest development project Homewood has experienced in decades.

**WEST** – From a new barbeque restaurant in **Sheraden**, to a new Pittsburgh Steak Hoagie Shop in **Elliott**, to the region's only Steinway-authorized piano gallery opening its doors in the **West End's** growing business district – 2012 was a banner year for Pittsburgh's western neighborhoods. Residents celebrated the recent opening of West End Works, a neighborhood employment center that will connect residents to available jobs and training opportunities, and welcomed luxury townhomes to be built near the West End Overlook. Additionally, through the Mayor's Neighborhood Stabilization Program, seven foreclosed homes will be rehabilitated and sold to new homeowners, and the URA issued a request for proposals last month to bring a grocery store to Sheraden.

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