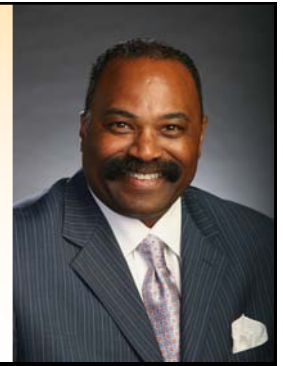




Craig Connection

Columbus City Council



Summer 2008

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Hi, I'm [Hearcel F. Craig](#), chair of the Judiciary and Court Administration Committee and the Minority and Small Business Development Committee. It has been a busy summer and the pace of important work will continue as the City gears up for the largest bond package in its history this November. You can read about the package and find more information on page 2 of this newsletter.

One way Council makes sure it is in tune with citizens is through public hearings. I urge you to take advantage of opportunities to let Council know what you think. I am currently hosting meetings on the prevalence of domestic violence in Columbus and on how the City can help small, and emerging businesses prosper. Please stay tuned to [Council's website](#) for updates on public hearings.

As always, you can contact my office at 645-7379 to speak with my aide, Talia Brown, or reach her at: TJBrown@columbus.gov. Thanks for reading and have a great summer.

AN IMPORTANT DATA SOURCE FOR THE COLUMBUS COMMUNITY

Community Research Partners, a local non-profit research center, has created an extensive, easy-to-use database that is packed with information and tools on one website - information you can use for program design, needs assessment, resource allocation, grant applications, market analysis, and program evaluation, or to just find out more about your neighborhood and community.

The Community Indicators section makes data accessible to the general public. It includes "ready to use" graphs, tables, and bullet-point analysis that provide a big picture perspective on our community. It also contains many useful links to national, state and local sources, such as the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services and the Greater Columbus Area of Commerce. I encourage you to visit. Here's a link to the website: [Community Research Partners](#).



CRAIG PROMOTES HIGH-TECH INNOVATORS

Growing and emerging small and high-tech companies play an important role in the City's future. That's why Councilmember [Hearcel F. Craig](#) has moved to better understand the needs of such firms in Columbus. In May, Craig held the first of a planned series of public meetings to learn how City Council can assist the creation and retention of innovative sectors of our economy. Craig, who chairs the Minority and Small Business Development Committee, met with leaders and business owners at TechColumbus, the agency coordinating the area's technology development efforts.

"TechColumbus is a shining example of what can happen when great business and high-tech minds come together," said Craig. "This City Council continues to assist companies that are on the leading edge of the information and bio-medical industries, and we as a city need to make sure we are doing everything we can to build on the successes we have experienced."

If you have a great innovative idea and need help getting off the ground, you are encouraged to visit [TechColumbus](#) for assistance.

To read about the second meeting in this effort to promote small business growth in Columbus, see page 5 of this newsletter.



Councilmember Craig with representatives from three of the tenant companies at the TechColumbus Campus on Kinnear Road. Left to right: Dave Maetzold (The Palestra Group), R.C. Wheelless (Insight ETE), and Alan Arman (3-X).

INVESTING IN HIGH STREET

Surrounded by business owners and residents, Mayor Coleman and Councilmember [Hearcel F. Craig](#) officially kicked off the \$15.8 million dollar neighborhood revitalization project on High Street, between Lane and Arcadia avenues in an area of town known as Old North Columbus.



Craig recently participated in the groundbreaking event for capital improvements just north of the OSU Campus on High Street.

"The small businesses that line High Street are essential portions of the fabric that make the University Area so unique among our many energetic and vibrant neighborhoods," said Councilmember Craig. "These businesses will benefit greatly from the infrastructure improvements we as a City are making."

The project includes: storm sewers to alleviate flooding during heavy rainstorms; water lines; sidewalks, curbs, and ADA ramps; traffic signals; 85 decorative street lights; street trees; 40 bike racks; two over-the road arches to welcome people to Old North Columbus; and street resurfacing.

The project continues the City's strong support and investment on High Street, both in the South Campus Gateway as a partner with OSU and in Clintonville, where a \$5.3 million streetscape project was completed in 2005.

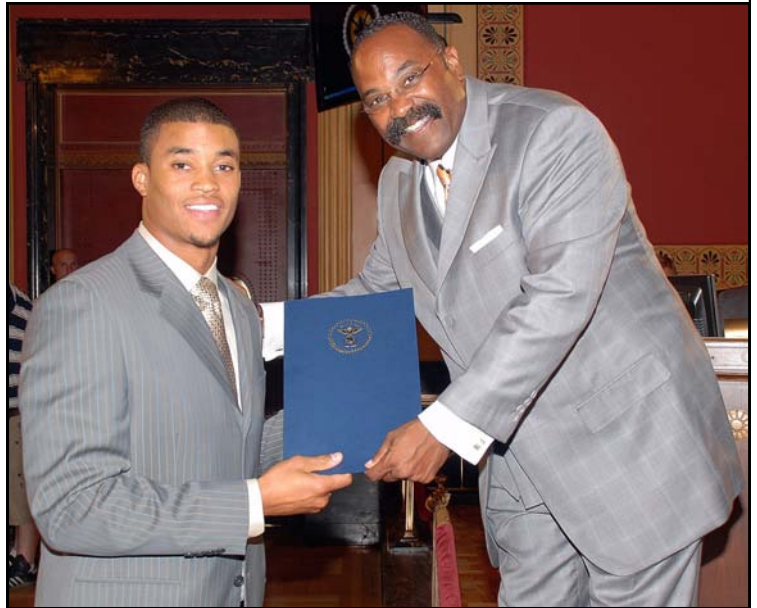
COUNCIL RECOGNIZES ROBISKIE

Arthur Ashe Jr. is remembered as a great tennis player and a role model for young people looking to make a positive impact on their community while they pursue personal excellence. Council recognized Ohio State University wide receiver Brian Robiskie in July as following in Ashe's footsteps.

Robiskie is OSU's first-ever finalist for the national Arthur Ashe Jr. Sports Scholar of the Year award. The award is for minority students who have excelled in academics, athletics and community activism.

"Brian inspires us all with his dedication to academics," said Councilmember [Hearcel F. Craig](#). "While his accomplishments on the football field are impressive, his academic achievements are even more extraordinary."

Brian excelled on the football field last year as OSU's leading receiver with 55 catches for 935 yards and 11 touchdowns. Like Ashe, Brian understand the importance of a good education. Foregoing the NFL to finish out his senior year and acquire his degree, Robiskie is in the running to be named a two-time Academic All-American, the 6th winner of that honor in Ohio State University history.



Hearcel Craig executes a handoff to Brian Robiskie.

COUNCIL FIGHTS HOMELESSNESS



Council members Craig, Tavares, and Tyson with Barb Poppe (2nd from left), executive director of CSB.

The National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty estimates that approximately 3.5 million people in our country, 1.35 million of them children, experience homelessness each year. African-Americans comprise 42% of the U.S. homeless population.

Councilmember Craig attended the June 5 Annual Mel Schottenstein Birthday Celebration at the Greater Columbus Convention Center. The program's goal was to raise awareness of issues and challenges faced by the homeless in Columbus due to the lack of affordable housing and supportive services.

The celebration raised funds to maintain programs and services of the Community Shelter Board (CSB) and its agencies. The CSB's Rebuilding Lives Program works to transition the homeless to permanent housing. City Council supports CSB and its partner agencies in developing health, employment and social service programs, which leads to greater economic independence for those needing to break the cycle of homelessness. CSB is a small, self-directed non-profit organization, dedicated to develop solutions for ending for the cause of homelessness. For more information, please visit www.csb.org.

ECONOMIC COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE (ECDI)

Councilmember member [Hearcel F. Craig](#) has been very active in the local small business community this summer and has just finished his second in a series of briefings as Chairman of the Minority and Small Business Development Committee. The July 30th meeting was held at the Economic Community Development



Anthony Frazier of Urban Chefs discussed the issues and challenges faced by small and minority businesses in Columbus.

Urban Chefs have the capital that will lead to growth and expansion.”

Urban Chefs is a specialty sauce and condiments maker headquartered in Columbus and is co-owned by Anthony Frazier. “Urban Chefs is a very small business with big dreams,” said Frazier. “We needed a group to invest in our future, while giving us the tools we need to succeed in today’s competitive business climate.”

In 2007, Frazier worked with the Microenterprise Development program at ECDI and was awarded a \$4,000 loan, with a majority of the loan funded by the City of Columbus. Urban Chefs is working towards further expanding its manufacturing plant locally. Other presenters at the briefing included Bruce Benis of Benny’s Gourmet Lunches and Tracy Cohen with Superior Home Maintenance Company.

ECDI is a non-profit organization that provides small loans, in the amounts of \$1,000 to \$35,000, to start-up, newly established, or growing small businesses and is the sole provider of micro-enterprise loans for the City of Columbus. For more information on their programs, please visit their Web site www.ecdi.org.

If you would like to see the taped recording of the briefing, please check GTC3’s Web site for air times. The next Minority and Small Business Development Committee meeting will be held in Council Chambers in October, and will be announced shortly.

(Contributions to this article were made by Daniel Goins, summer intern with Councilmember Craig’s Office.)



Councilmember Craig and Tracy Cohen of the Superior Home Maintenance Company.

Institute (ECDI) and featured presentations from Inna Kinney, ECDI’s Founder and CEO, and three Columbus small business owners that have received loans from the City of Columbus Loan Fund through ECDI’s program which helped them expand their businesses.

“The small business community is the backbone of our larger economy,” said Councilmember Craig. “My committee is working to ensure that businesses like

A NEAR EAST SIDE RESURGENCE



Smart shopper Hearcel Craig likes to coordinate his fruit with his tie.

Near East side residents no longer have to take taxis and buses to bring home fresh fruits, vegetables and meats to their families – thanks to the opening of the Heritage Square Marketplace Save-A-Lot store at 1170 E. Main St.

Many neighborhood, state and city leaders, including Councilmember Craig and Mayor Michael B. Coleman, were on hand for the ribbon-cutting ceremony on May 21.

The economically challenged neighborhood has been without a nearby grocery store since a Kroger at Parsons and Livingston avenues closed in 2006. It is the former site of a Salvation Army store, and the 16,000-square-foot store has had plans in the making for the past six years. Plans to attract more retailers to the 60,000-square-foot development are in process, with room for at least four more stores.

The new store also brought jobs to the struggling area. Save-A-Lot currently employs 36 full- and part-time workers with an annual payroll of \$730,000.

Along with Save-A-Lot, Simply Fashions, an affordable women's clothing store with items priced at \$30 and under, also opened its doors for the first time. Simply Fashions now has three full-time and three-part time employees.

IMPORTANT UPCOMING EVENTS:

DANCING TONIGHT WITH THE STARS – Councilmember Craig will join other Columbus “stars” on August 15, 2008 at The Little Bear Golf Club; 1940 Little Bear Loop, Lewis Center, OH 43035, 6pm – 10pm. This fundraising event supports minority students and students with disabilities into postsecondary education and the workforce. It will feature a live auction on a “dance of a lifetime” with local and national celebrities, elected officials, television and radio personalities. For more info, visit www.wrightchoice.org.

THE POWER OF ART – ArtSafe presents “The Power of Art” Awards ceremony on Wednesday, September 17th, 2008 from 5:00 -7:30 p.m. at the Limited Brands Headquarters, Three Limited Parkway in Columbus. The program will feature great food and refreshments, entertainment, along with silent and live art auctions. ArtSafe is a nonprofit organization with programs designed towards school children, families and incarcerated youth to help build lives and safer communities through the arts. For more information, call 614-237-9077.

DO BUSINESS GLOBALLY – 2008 Statewide Minority International Trade Conference, October 2, 2008 at the William Green Building Auditorium, 30 W. Spring Street. This one-day program offers workshops and panel discussions with successful minority business enterprises engaged in exporting. For more information, contact Ohio Department of Development at 800-848-1300.