

## **Mayor Michael B. Coleman** Columbus, Ohio

Since taking office in 2000, Mayor Michael B. Coleman's core focus has been building stronger, safer neighborhoods and creating jobs by continuing to improve Columbus's high quality of life. Mayor Coleman was first elected in 1999, re-elected in 2003 and won a third term in November 2007.

Mayor Coleman has leveraged incentives to create and retain more than 65,000 jobs and bring more than \$4.5 billion in private investment to Columbus throughout his tenure. Growing companies enjoy an educated workforce from 18 regional colleges and universities. Columbus is centrally located to national markets and a growing transportation, distribution and logistics hub. The city, currently the 16<sup>th</sup> largest in America, is also growing as a retail hub.

Mayor Coleman initiated Neighborhood Pride, a proactive effort to engage residents and businesses to fix up thousands of homes and clean up their neighborhoods. Mayor Coleman adopted a Pay as We Grow annexation policy requiring developers to bear the costs of extending water, sewer and electricity. Under the mayor's leadership, Columbus has reinvested in older Columbus neighborhoods such as Franklinton, the King Lincoln District, South of Livingston, Northland, Olde North Columbus and South Linden. Under the mayor's leadership, the city is embarking on revitalization strategies for the Near South Side, the Far South Side, and the West Broad Street Corridor.

In 2006, the mayor created the Home Again program and set aside \$25 million to acquire, rehab and tear down vacant and abandoned houses in Columbus neighborhoods. To date, more than 600 homes have been impacted. In 2007, Mayor Coleman created the Affordable Housing Trust Corporation to provide more housing options to inner-city residents. He has increased the development of new homes for families, spurring construction through city incentives of more than 12,500 new housing units. In addition, Mayor Coleman led the restoration of the historic Lincoln Theatre, the linchpin of the King Lincoln District, which has been revitalized after decades of neglect and blight. The area is rebounding with seven major commercial and residential projects totaling \$30 million in new private investments.

Mayor Coleman worked with business leaders to start a massive Downtown revitalization initiative. Since 2002 more than 5,000 new apartments and condos have been built or are under development, a new Downtown park system is being designed, 3,000 jobs have been moved into Downtown, and there has been more than \$2.18 billion in new investment. In addition, the long-vacant former City Center mall site is being developed into Columbus Commons, a central park space with opportunities for business, residential and retail development.

Mayor Coleman has a proven record of balancing budgets and reforming government. Columbus is the only large city in the nation to maintain a AAA Bond rating from all three major rating agencies. Since 2009, Mayor Coleman has taken steps that will save more than \$100 million over the next decade by getting employee benefits in line with the market while reducing unnecessary overtime, increasing the use of technology and making the city more energy efficient. Mayor Coleman, City Council and Auditor Hugh Dorrian have committed to additional savings through their 10-Year Reform Plan.

Columbus has made tremendous strides protecting the environment under Mayor Coleman, who created the ongoing Get Green Columbus campaign. The mayor has made a commitment to improving energy efficiency in older city facilities while requiring that every new city construction project be LEED-certified by the U.S. Green Building Council. The mayor's Bicentennial Bikeways Plan calls for an additional 36 miles of off-road trails and 58 miles of on-street bike lanes and routes by the year 2015. In addition, more than 100 bike racks have been placed in and around Downtown, and 54 Share the Road signs have been installed on North High Street to remind motorists and bicyclists of their rights and responsibilities. In 2008 Mayor Coleman created the GreenSpot program to inspire, educate and recognize residents and businesses making efforts to protect our environment. The mayor also promised a comprehensive curbside recycling program by 2012 and pledged to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from city operations by 40 percent before 2030.

Under Mayor Coleman's leadership, the City of Columbus has been recognized as one of the 10 best large cities and one of the 10 most affordable metro areas by RelocateAmerica. It was recognized as the nation's 8<sup>th</sup> best place to live by CNN and Money magazine, which also declared Columbus as the nation's safest big city. Forbes Magazine has recognized Columbus as the top up-and-coming tech city and the top city in which to retire. Columbus regularly makes top rankings as a hot destination for relocation of businesses: In December of 2008 it was ranked as the 7<sup>th</sup> best metro area for business by WSJ MarketWatch; in June 2008 it was ranked the 7<sup>th</sup> best city for high-impact companies by the U.S. Small Business Administration; it was ranked as the 3<sup>rd</sup> "Big City of the Future" by international fDi Magazine and the 4<sup>th</sup> "most business friendly." In addition, Columbus continues to earn top rankings for its stable housing market, affordability, and as a top city for African Americans, young professionals, and members of the GLBT community.

Coleman was born on November 18, 1954. He has three children, Kimberly, a private banker in Chicago; Justin, a Columbus police officer; and John-David, a student at Ohio State University. Prior to becoming mayor, Coleman served as President of Columbus City Council from January of 1997 to November of 1999, and as a council member from February of 1992 to December of 1999. Coleman graduated from the University of Cincinnati in 1977 with a degree in Political Science and earned his law degree from the University of Dayton Law School in 1980.

**Source:** Office of the Mayor, City Hall, 90 W. Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio.