

Empowering Byesville: Collaboration, Innovation, and Regional Leadership

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Photo overlooking the Village of Byesville.

Nestled just south of the Interstate 70-77 split in Eastern Ohio lies the quaint yet industrially vibrant Village of Byesville. At the heart of this community stands a dedicated leader and the Mayor's right-hand man, Village Administrator Brennan Dudley, who has been steering Byesville's ship since 2012. Dudley's role is pivotal, overseeing the village's day-to-day operations, which include managing water, wastewater, street departments, and various projects, along with providing support to the police and fire departments.

What sets Byesville apart from its peers is not just its picturesque setting but also its unique blend of location and infrastructure. Situated strategically to attract significant traffic, the village serves as a hub for commuters and boasts six industrial factories producing a range of goods, from juice boxes to diesel engines. Despite its modest population, Byesville hosts 500 to 1,000 daily workers from outside of the village, underscoring its pivotal role in Eastern Ohio's industrial landscape.

Moreover, Byesville's self-sufficiency shines through its robust infrastructure, which forms the backbone of its thriving community. At the heart of this infrastructure lies the village's state-of-the-art water and wastewater facilities. These facilities not only ensure a reliable supply of clean water for Byesville's residents but also play a vital role in supporting its industrial base. Byesville also extends its services, supplying water not only to neighboring areas but also to another village. This collaborative approach not only fosters goodwill among neighboring communities but also reinforces Byesville's reputation as a dependable partner in addressing shared challenges.

Byesville has witnessed remarkable progress across various fronts. Embracing the digital age, Dudley has coached the village to make strides in enhancing communication channels through

social media and website platforms, ensuring transparency and accessibility of information to its residents.

Infrastructure has been a key focus area, with significant investments made to replace aging water and wastewater lines, resulting in a drastic reduction in annual leaks. Dudley's emphasis on self-reliance has empowered the village to undertake cost-effective measures, such as paving its own streets, leading to substantial savings for taxpayers. By repaving the streets themselves, the village saves 70% of the cost.

However, Byesville's journey has not been without its challenges. Financial constraints forced the village to disband its police department in 2008, but it was revived in 2012, and Byesville subsequently expanded police, fire, and EMS services to improve community safety.

In the face of adversities like the COVID-19 pandemic, Byesville remained resilient, albeit with a temporary slowdown in momentum. Nonetheless, the village emerged stronger, with businesses weathering the storm and poised for future growth.

Central to Byesville's success story is its collaborative spirit, epitomized by Dudley's leadership philosophy of "teamwork makes the dream work." Building strategic partnerships with stakeholders, including local industries and neighboring villages, has been instrumental in addressing shared challenges and fostering economic development.

One such collaboration is the Mayors' Partnership for Progress (MPP), a transformative platform that fosters collaboration and knowledge-sharing among municipal leaders. As an active participant in the MPP, Village Administrator Brennan Dudley has played a pivotal role in leveraging this network to propel Byesville's development forward.

Dudley's engagement with the MPP has proven invaluable, providing him with a forum to exchange insights, strategies, and best practices with fellow village administrators. Through this collaborative platform, Dudley has gained access to a wealth of knowledge and expertise, allowing him to glean innovative solutions to common challenges faced by municipalities across the region.

Moreover, Dudley's involvement in the MPP has paved the way for joint initiatives and projects that have yielded tangible benefits for Byesville and its counterparts. By leveraging the collective resources and expertise of MPP members, Byesville has been able to embark on ambitious endeavors that may have been beyond the reach of individual municipalities.

The MPP serves as a conduit for collaboration, facilitating the exchange of ideas and experiences that empower municipal leaders like Dudley to tackle complex issues more effectively. From legislative advocacy to funding opportunities, the MPP provides Byesville with a comprehensive

toolkit to address a myriad of challenges and seize opportunities for growth and development.



The site at which the Southeastern Ohio Center for Business and Innovation will be located.

Looking ahead, Byesville's horizon brims with promise as it embarks on ambitious projects aimed at transforming its economic landscape and enhancing community well-being. At the forefront stands the Southeastern Ohio Center for Business and Innovation, a visionary endeavor that promises to be a catalyst for economic growth and entrepreneurship. This state-of-the-art facility, housed in a revitalized elementary school building at the heart of the village, will serve as a hub for innovation, collaboration, and skills development. Partnering with key stakeholders from healthcare, entrepreneurship, technology, and culture sectors, Byesville aims to create a dynamic ecosystem that nurtures startups, fosters job creation, and drives economic diversification.

Moreover, Byesville's commitment to progress extends beyond the confines of the innovation center, with ongoing infrastructure expansions poised to further bolster the village's capacity to meet the needs of its residents and industries. From sewer line expansions to downtown revitalization projects like Patriot Park, Byesville is laying the groundwork for a vibrant and sustainable future.

As Dudley reflects on his journey, his advice resonates with aspiring leaders: embrace innovation, forge meaningful partnerships, and leverage existing assets to propel communities forward.