

THE HERALD-PRESS

As low as 80¢ with a paid subscription

WWW.H-PONLINE.COM

Your Family. Your Neighbors. Your Newspaper.

Parkway named in memory of Archbishop Noll opens



PHOTOS BY ANDREW MACIEJEWSKI/Huntington Herald-Press
CUT: Karen Schafbuch, a great niece of Archbishop Noll, cuts the ribbon at the ceremony, Tuesday.

Old US 24 memorialized for local entrepreneur, officials hope upgrades spark economic development

BY ANDREW MACIEJEWSKI
amaciejewski@hponline.com

People driving down Old US 24 will notice significant changes now that the newly memorialized Archbishop Noll Memorial Parkway is officially open, following a ribbon cutting Tuesday.

The 1.7-million, 6-to-8-month-long project included removing an east-bound lane to make room for an 8-foot wide multi-use trail, along with drainage improvements, cut-outs for drivers to access businesses and repaving of mile-long stretch, said Public Works and Engineering Services director Anthony Goodnight.

Goodnight said the city received nearly \$700,000 from the state through a Community Crossings Grant to fund the project. He said the city's planning helped build the trail cheaper than past trail projects by coordinating all of the projects together with the grant funding.

"The misconception is that we built this for just a trail, but in reality



TALK: Our Sunday Visitor CEO Kyle Hamilton talks about how people began using the trails before construction was complete on the upgraded roadway. He said, "I think the asphalt was still steaming."

it would have cost us \$1 million to pave and do all of the drainage work that we did, which would have had to been done anyway," Goodnight said.

Community Development and Redevelopment director Bryn Keplinger said the city used tax increment financing — which is where the City

uses future property tax revenue increases toward economic development projects within a defined area slated for improvement.

"When the City shows its commitment to a worn-out roadway, by way of significant investment such as this, it makes it easier for businesses, both

small and large, to follow suit without hesitation and reinvest in their properties as well," Keplinger said. "And those are the sorts of things that we expect to happen following this sort of project."

The ribbon-cutting ceremony took place at

See PARKWAY / Page A2

PARKWAY

Continued from A1

a strategic location, as the newly-built parkway goes right past Our Sunday Visitor, which was founded by Archbishop John Francis Noll, who was an entrepreneur and spurred economic development in Huntington.

Noll was a prominent priest, writer, editor, publisher, educator, speaker and entrepreneur that left Fort Wayne to establish a national, Catholic publishing company here in Huntington, according to Our Sunday Visitor's website.

Noll's \$1 investment in a printing press brought about one of the largest English publishing companies in the world, which now stands today off Old US 24.

Our Sunday Visitor CEO Kyle Hamilton said he believes the new parkway will continue to build on the economic development of Huntington.

"We all know the value of first impressions, and this parkway will definitely make a great first impression for those coming to Huntington..." Hamilton said. "Entering Huntington on this beautiful gateway to the city will definitely change their initial and final impression of Huntington as a great place to live work and raise a family and possibly start of relocate their business."

Monsignor Owen Campion, former associate editor of Our Sunday Visitor, said the memorialization of the eastern gateway into Huntington was fitting considering Noll was a pioneer in Huntington and abroad because of the relationships Noll built.

"I think that it's typical that a thoroughfare be named in his honor because it sort of represents outreach to people beyond Huntington and their coming to us, so it's very fitting that we are here today," Campion said.

Huntington Area Recreational Trail Association

(HARTA) President Ji Lewis said the trail and improved roadway will benefit the community by creating a space for physical activity attracting businesses and individuals to the community increasing property value and increasing the safety of those traveling from the pump track, skate park, at Lake Clare to downtown Huntington.

Huntington Mayor Brook Fetters said he was excited to display signage to explain the significance of the roadway and honor Noll's legacy.

"As we gather here this morning, we gather at a place in this community that is prominent pathway since the earliest record of time. Right out here... there have been Indian trails, canoes, canoes, boats, railroads, interurban automobiles and trucks, Fetters said. "This corridor in the east face of Huntington and it has been remade once again. It screams welcome to a great community, welcome to Huntington."