

North Olmsted delivers convenience, connections to renters



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on January 25, 2015 at 5:00 AM, updated January 25, 2015 at 5:02 AM

North Olmsted may not be a mecca of newer apartment options, but the west side community has much to offer renters who land on its bustling soil. The city is home to more than a bundle of shopping options, including the many stores of Great Northern Mall and nearby North Olmsted Towne Centre. Not a shopper? Catch a movie at its brand new Regal Cinema 10. Want to get out and get moving? Other perks include two Cleveland Metroparks reservations, two golf courses, two ice skating rinks, indoor and outdoor swimming pools, a recreation center and community parks.



"This is a great community for renters because of the amenities in the city, including its proximity shopping and other daily conveniences," said Greg Myers, economic development manager for the city of North Olmsted. "Everything you need is in one spot whether that's shopping for groceries, furniture or clothes, or dining or recreation."

Kimberly Wenger, director of planning and development, said much of the city's new development in terms of apartments is aimed at retiring baby boomers and seniors who want to live independently, but in a community that provides supportive services and

Those include The Apartments at St. Richard, a 34-unit, \$6.5-million complex for adults 55 and over, which was opened in 2013 by the Catholic Charities of Cleveland. The two-story building features an elevator, a community room, an outdoor patio, a library with a fireplace, laundry facilities and resident parking, and its one- and two-bedroom suites come with full kitchens including appliances and abundant closet space.



North Olmsted is also home to the new Emerald Valley Retirement Community, another Catholic Charities property. Located next door to St. Clarence Church, the apartments at Emerald Valley provide full, all-electric kitchens, generous closets, emergency call systems and individually controlled heating and cooling. In many suites, large windows offer views of Metroparks Bradley Woods nature area. Community services include weekly housekeeping, continental breakfast daily and wellness, social and recreational programs.

Along with new senior housing, Wenger said other notable offerings include The Enclave at Kenno Ridge and Great Northern Valley. The Enclave features a variety of garden-style apartments and townhomes situated on a lush, secluded property. Many of the rentals have interesting finishes like crown molding, gas fireplaces, garden tubs and washer and dryer hook-ups. Conveniently located near Great North Mall, Great Northern Valley is undergoing a facelift. All new windows were installed in 2014. Community amenities include an outdoor swimming pool, a fitness center and a party room for family functions.

As North Olmsted embarks on a year-long celebration of its bicentennial, now is a great time to highlight some of the things that make it a good place for renters to call home.

Retail Therapy

While North Olmsted is not all about shopping, it is hard to talk about the city without referring to retail prowess. The flagship Great Northern Mall has more than 130 stores and is anchored by Macy's, Dillard's, Sears and J.C. Penney. Myers said recent improvements at the mall include a renovated food court, new restaurants and the addition of a 10-screen theater, which features what the company calls an RPX, or Regal Premium Experience, auditorium. The massive screen in the RPX auditorium measures more than 55-feet wide and includes a special digital audio system and leather seats with headrest.

Outside the mall is a wide variety of shopping options ranging from big box stores and furniture retailers to specialized shops like the Bavarian Village Ski & Snowboard Outfitters and Perani's Hockey World. And for the foodies, the city is host to a number of restaurants including Whiskey

expansion at Great Northern Mall and specializes in burgers and craft beers.

Yet, one of the best things about North Olmsted, Myers said, is that if you can't find what you are looking for here, the city's central location makes it easy to get almost anywhere in the Greater Cleveland area. North Olmsted is nestled just west of Fairview Park and south of Westlake with three exits on Interstate 480 for an easy commute to Cleveland or the



outer burbs. The new Stearns-Crocker connector, meanwhile, provides a direct thoroughfare into Westlake, with its popular Crocker Park shopping development, and all points north.

"Many people don't realize North Olmsted has such connections to the north," he said, adding that residents also can commute to Avon, Avon Lake and places like Lorain County College with ease.

Parks and Recreation

Another feature of North Olmsted is its abundance of recreational opportunities. The Cleveland Metroparks operates two reservations – Bradley Woods Reservation and Rocky River Reservation that have property in North Olmsted. The reservations have hiking trails, paths for biking and walking, lakes for fishing and plenty of pleasant spots to picnic, play or bird-watch.

Other recreational amenities include the North Olmsted Recreation Center. Wenger said the city invested nearly \$2 million last year to upgrade the complex with a new fitness center and enhancements throughout the facility, which already featured two ice rinks, indoor and outdoor swimming pools and indoor tennis courts and gymnastics center.

"Not many communities have both an indoor and outdoor swimming pool," she said, "and to have a new fitness center on top of that is a real advantage to residents."

The city is also home to Springvale Golf Course and Ballroom, a 6,304-yard, 18-hole public golf course and banquet facility. And, voters passed an \$81-million, 34-year bond issue for constructing a new middle school and high school building, including a new athletic

To mark its bicentennial, North Olmsted will host special music- and movie-in-the-park events all summer long and amp up its annual Homecoming Festival, which is held each August. All of which, Myers said, add to a community that already "has a lot to offer."

