

**BID-Bits**

**OBID Renewal**

With the support of Oakland's City Council Members Bruce A. Kraus (District 3), William Peduto (District 8) and Tonya Payne (District 6), the OBID is seeking the continued designation of the Oakland Business Improvement District effective March 18, 2009. The OBID Board of Directors, comprised of member property and business owners and local government and institution leaders, are also in full support of the continued designation of the Oakland Business Improvement District.

Since 1999, OBID has made tremendous progress in strengthening one of Pennsylvania's most important economic centers, implementing programs and initiatives benefiting over 275 member business and property owners within the BID. Our members have witnessed:

- \* 5% reduction in storefront vacancies
- \* 70% reduction in Graffiti Vandalism
- \* Complete removal of sidewalk trash and litter
- \* 33 storefront renovations
- \* 96% OBID members surveyed saw an annual growth in sales
- \* Over \$1.3 million invested in public infrastructure improvements
- \* Leveraged over \$800,000 in grant funding to support business district services initiatives

The OBID thanks you for your continued support and we look forward to a successful year ahead!

## OBID Launches New Website

OBID has recently launched the updated [onlyinoakland.org](http://onlyinoakland.org) website. The updated version combines the [oaklandbid.org](http://oaklandbid.org) and the former [onlyinoakland.org](http://onlyinoakland.org) into one user-friendly website with features both for visitors to Oakland and OBID member property owners and business owners.

The new website has a members only section where OBID property owners can submit listings of their available real estate. The real estate listings are available to all users of the website through the Commercial Real Estate locator tool on the homepage.

The visitor section of the website has lists of the different businesses in Oakland with their address and phone number by category of business. The visitor section also features descriptions of the various amenities of Oakland, from theatres and schools to museums and hospitals.

The OBID section of the website contains information about the organization.

OBID is planning for the next phase of the website update to feature tools where members can choose to display their contact information for other OBID members to see to promote dialogue among OBID members.



Homepage of the new [onlyinoakland.org](http://onlyinoakland.org)

Additionally, Phase II will feature a tool that allows businesses to list employment opportunities for all users of the site to see.

In order to be able to post real estate listings, OBID members need to click on the OBID tab on the main menu. This will bring up a new page with a menu on the left of the screen. A members only section is at the bottom of the menu. Members can create their username and password. Once a member is approved, they can post their property listings or share information with other members.

Make sure you check out the new features of [onlyinoakland.org](http://onlyinoakland.org). For more information, please call (412) 683-6243

### Clean Indoor Air Act



**Oakland Roundtable**  
for all OBID members

**Thursday, November 20**  
**3:00 pm**  
**Peter's Pub, 2nd Floor**  
**116 Oakland Avenue**

**Topic: The Clean Indoor Air Act**

On September 11, 2008 Pennsylvania enacted the Clean Indoor Air Act (Act 27). This law makes smoking in most work spaces illegal. Guest speaker Cindy Thomas of Tobacco Free Allegheny will be discussing ways in which businesses can ensure that they are compliant with Act 27.

### Save the Date

**2008 OBID Annual  
Holiday Party!!!**

**Date: Thursday, December 11**

**Place: Hurley Associates**

**3508 Fifth Avenue**

**Look out for more info!**



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## Let's Go Pitt Campaign Continues with Basketball

OBID and Pitt Athletics invite OBID members to attend a special meeting to discuss how the successful Let's Go Pitt campaign will expand into the basketball season.



The Pitt Panther Football Team has been dominating their opponents as they continue to impress Panther fans nation-wide. Oakland's business district has been able to capitalize on the successes of the football team through the energy and extra foot-traffic that they bring to Oakland on each of their home-game-weekends. While the end of the football season is still several months away, OBID plans to continue its partnership with Pitt Athletics into the men's basketball season.

As one of the top programs in the country, the Pitt Panther's men's basketball team attracts sell-out crowds to Oakland's Petersen Event Center with each of their 21 home games.

### Let's Go Pitt Planning Meeting For OBID Members

**Date: Thursday, November 13**

**Time: 5:30 p.m. — 7:00 p.m.**

**Place: Petersen Events Center, 3719 Terrace Street**



Go to [www.onlyinoakland.org](http://www.onlyinoakland.org) for the Pitt Men's Basketball season schedule.

## Cell-Phone Exchange Opens in Oakland

The Oakland business district is home to yet another new business. Cell-phone Exchange opened its doors on August 25 at 118 Meyran Avenue.

Chad Flora, owner of Cell-Phone Exchange (118 Meyran Avenue), chose Oakland as a location because of the heavy pedestrian traffic in the neighborhood. "There are always people walking around. It gives the neighborhood a good vibe," said Flora.

Cell-Phone Exchange specializes in selling new and used cell-phones, and in buying used cell-phones. Flora, who worked for T-Mobile for several years before deciding to open Cell Phone Exchange, noticed a niche in the market for used cell phones. He decided that rather than having

people dispose of their cell phones when they get a new phone, they could sell them so that others could use them.

If someone who has a phone plan loses their phone, they often have to sign up for a new plan to get a phone at an affordable price. At Cell Phone Exchange, consumers can buy a cheaper, replacement phone.

"Everything I sell is cheaper than what you can get at other places," said Flora. Cell Phone Exchange is open Monday thru Friday, 10:00 am—5:00 pm, and on Saturdays, 11:00 am 3:00pm.



## Mayor Ravenstahl's Storefront Renovation Program

Mayor Luke Ravenstahl's Storefront Renovation Program is a URA reimbursement program that property owners can utilize to help finance improvements to the facades of their properties.

The URA will provide grants to commercial establishments including: professional services, personal services, certain repair services (office equipment, radio/television, bicycle, furniture, locksmith, etc), and business services. Banks, savings and loan associations, gas and service stations, used car lots, home-based businesses and adult entertainment establishments are not eligible.

Grants will be provided for "exterior building

improvements based on an approved work plan which can include: storefront lighting, signage, windows, painting, etc."

Grants will be up to 50% or \$5,000 maximum for eligible improvements. There is a non-fundable \$250 application fee per eligible property.

The URA also offers the Streetface program which operates as a loan program. The Streetface program will provide a loan of up to 40% or \$30,000 maximum for eligible improvements.

For more information on either of these two programs, contact Quianna Wasler, Mainstreet Development Specialist of the URA at (412) 255-6550 or [qwasler@ura.org](mailto:qwasler@ura.org).

### BID-Bits

- Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh of UPMC Selected as a 2008 Top Hospital**

The nation's premier hospital patient safety evaluation tool, Leapfrog Hospital Survey, selected Children's Hospital as one of seven children's hospitals in the nation to be a 2008 Top Hospital. The Leapfrog Survey evaluates patient safety at more than 1,220 participating hospitals. (Originally reported in [medicalnewstoday.com](http://medicalnewstoday.com)).



Children's Hospital

- OBID Awarded \$10,000** OBID would like to thank PA Representative Dan Frankel for his award of \$10,000 for 2009. The award comes from the PA Department of Community and Economic Development, through Representative Frankel's office. Thank You!



Representative Dan Frankel



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