



news release

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Economic Well-Being of Canton, Cleveland and Youngstown Is Focus of Western Reserve PBS Special

*The Living Cities responds to communities' inclusion
in Forbes.com article, "America's Fastest-Dying Cities"*

KENT, Ohio — Friday, Oct. 10, 2008 — An Aug. 5, 2008 report by Forbes.com that named four Ohio cities — Canton, Cleveland, Dayton and Youngstown — to its list of top-10 fastest-dying cities has generated much discussion, especially in northeast Ohio's three communities that made the unfavorable list.

Western Reserve PBS (a service of Western Reserve Public Media) will give local and regional community leaders an opportunity to respond to the Forbes rankings in a one-hour broadcast, **The Living Cities**, to air on Friday, Oct. 17 at 8 p.m.

The program will present field segments on each of northeast Ohio's so-called "dying cities," featuring interviews with city officials and business leaders; a review of the statistics used by Forbes to make its assessments; and a broader view of what is happening in the three cities. It also will discuss the cities' economic development plans and neighborhood revitalization projects, plus the growing focus on regionalism.

These segments will be used as a springboard for a live, studio-based conversation during which viewers will be invited to participate through live call-in, e-mail, Twitter and other instant response technology.

Community leaders interviewed for the program, which is a joint production of Western Reserve Public Media in cooperation with Municipal Leader magazine, include the following:

- David Abbott, chairman, Fund for Our Economic Future
- Canton Mayor William Healy II
- Cleveland Mayor Frank Jackson

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- Warren Mayor Michael O'Brien
- Robert Torres, director, City of Canton Department of Development
- Chris Warren, chief of regional development, City of Cleveland
- Youngstown Mayor Jay Williams

The live panel discussion will be moderated by Eric Mansfield, host of Western Reserve PBS's **NewsNight Akron** and Akron/Canton reporter for WKYC-TV3. Participating on the panel will be these civic leaders:

- Pepper Pike Mayor Bruce Akers, who also is an advisory committee member of the Regional Economic Revenue Study (RERS)
- Leah Anglin-Walsh, Akron regional economic development director, Ohio Department of Development
- Ann Womer Benjamin, executive director, Northeast Ohio Council on Higher Education
- Robert Torres, director, City of Canton Department of Development
- Thomas Waltermire, chief executive officer, Team NEO
- T. Sharon Woodberry, director, City of Youngstown Economic Development
- Cleveland City Councilman Matt Zone, Ward 17, who is also president of the Northeast Ohio City Council Association

“Western Reserve Public Media and Municipal Leader magazine were very interested in digging under the surface of this report from Forbes,” stated Tom Speaks, editor-in-chief of Municipal Leader magazine. “We believe it is critical that the leaders of Canton, Cleveland and Youngstown and regional experts in the field of economic development address this controversy in a meaningful and open forum.”

Production funding for **The Living Cities** has been provided by Dominion Foundation and the Raymond John Wean Foundation. For more information about the production, call Western Reserve Public Media at 1-800-554-4549.

About Western Reserve Public Media

Western Reserve Public Media is owned and operated by Northeastern Educational Television of Ohio, Inc., a private, nonprofit corporation and consortium of Kent State University, The University of Akron and Youngstown State University. A trusted community resource, Western Reserve Public Media uses the power of commercial-free television and related services to enrich the lives of people through high-quality programming and educational services that teach, illuminate and inspire.

Western Reserve PBS, a service of Western Reserve Public Media, is the only broadcast television service that reaches all of northeast Ohio. It is available to 1.8 million households and 4.4 million people in the Cleveland and Youngstown designated market areas. In an average week, over 500,000 households tune in. Through funding from eTech Ohio, Western Reserve Public Media provides K-12 educational technology training and instructional television programming to 21,500 educators and 256,700 students in eight Ohio counties. For more information, visit www.WesternReservePublicMedia.org or call 1-800-554-4549.

About The Municipal Leader Magazine

The Municipal Leader magazine's purpose is to provide municipal, state and education professionals with timely information about local municipal governments so our readers may benefit from the successes and experiences of their peers. For more information, visit www.municipalleader.com or call 330-329-5680.