

The View from St.Clair

Friday, May 12, 2006

The Clean & Safe program began two weeks ago, unleashing both "**CLEANING AMBASSADORS**" and "**SAFETY AMBASSADORS**" into downtown Cleveland. The Ambassadors are dressed in distinctive, bright yellow polo shirts and blue pants and wear blue ponchos in rainy weather.

The Safety Ambassadors -- many on bicycles -- will give directions to visitors and help the Cleveland Police Department identify potential security issues.

The Cleaning Ambassadors will work daily to keep downtown sidewalks and public spaces clean and attractive.

The two teams are cross-trained in both cleaning and safety service, as well as in making referrals for community and social services.

Safety Ambassadors make the rounds of downtown in 12-hour shifts -- from 10 to 15 staffers per shift. Specific hours will be tailored to the needs of local stakeholders in each downtown neighborhood.

Ambassadors carry two-way radios to reach off-duty Cleveland Police officers --known as Peace officers -- hired by the contractor to provide supplementary security. The Peace Officer on duty will be in direct contact with the Cleveland Police Department.

"The presence of the Safety Ambassadors will bolster our work downtown and help us maintain an increasingly safe district for residents, workers, shoppers, and visitors," says Cleveland Police Chief Michael McGrath. "We welcome them and will work closely with them."

In addition to their regular duties, the Safety Ambassadors will be specifically trained to interact with the homeless. A designated Social Service Representative will help direct them to local outreach programs.

The Cleaning Ambassadors' work will include sweeping sidewalks, picking up litter, removing graffiti and weeds, and cleaning public areas.

Because I travel back and forth from The Warehouse District to the Theatre District for work everyday, I see the Clean & Safe Ambassadors all the time. They are doing a tremendous job! They are always hard at work and very friendly to those traveling through downtown.

Next time you are in downtown Cleveland, look around for all of these great individuals, Clean & Safe Ambassadors, Cleveland Executive Fellows and the many others making a positive and remarkable impact on downtown Cleveland.