

"The Station" Drive-Thru Coffee Shop to Open in Downtown Austinburg on June 4

Public Is Invited to a Ribbon-Cutting to Celebrate Phase I of a Downtown Revitalization Project by Austinburg Development Group, LLC

AUSTINBURG, OHIO, UNITED STATES, May 25, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Austinburg Development Group, LLC, (ADG) is pleased to announce the grand opening of The Station in downtown Austinburg, Ohio, a new drive-through offering fresh-roasted coffee and pastries.

On June 4, 2022, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., the public is invited to join local owners Wyatt and Margaret Bratt and Thomas and Clare Polak to celebrate the ribbon-cutting of The Station at the northeast corner of State

Routes 45 and 307. Austinburg trustee Byron Dutton and Port Authority Executive Director Mark Winchell will also be present. Come celebrate the opening with a free cup of coffee!

The opening of The Station is the first phase of a planned revitalization of downtown Austinburg by ADG as a part of an effort to spark a rejuvenation of this quaint small town, which is just eight miles from Ashtabula and a stop along the way to Lake County's famed Ohio wine country.

The Station's name is a direct nod to the property's storied history, which was the town's 1950s-era corner gas station for many years. Once called Auto World, but referred to locally as simply "the station," the abandoned gas station had sat empty for more than 30 years until the Ashtabula County Port Authority purchased it in 2016 and decontaminated the site. ADG then purchased it with an eye toward repurposing the building for both a coffee shop drive-through as well as co-owner Wyatt Bratt's custom furniture shop.



Thomas Polak, Clare Polak, Wyatt Bratt, Margaret Bratt, and Nora Bratt stand in front of The Station Drive-Thru, a newly redeveloped specialty coffee and pastry shop at the corner of State Routes 307 and 45 in downtown Austinburg, Ohio.

Much of the reclaimed wood, paneling, and materials used in the beautifully crafted restoration of the corner building were sourced from the gas station itself as well as from the building across the street that Thomas and Clare Polak also purchased.

“We kept the silhouette from the gas station in front but raised it higher, adding corbels under the eaves and beautiful architectural details that Wyatt designed,” says Thomas. “During the renovation, some of the older folks in town would stop by and tell us

stories about how they used to work there or how they loved the old General Store across the street. I love the small-town history that The Station represents.”



The Station Team inside the drive thru

The front half of the building features Wyatt Bratt’s custom furniture business, called Bratthaus, while an addition on the back serves as the coffee and pastry drive-thru. In future phases of the downtown renovation, the Polaks plan to open a full café and bakery in the building across the street.

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Thomas Polak

The Station will offer high-quality coffee with fresh roasted, internationally sourced beans. The menu includes Americano and flavored lattes, cappuccinos, macchiatos, and espressos, as well as several teas and smoothie options. A carefully curated selection of fresh, hand-crafted pastries and breakfast items will include muffins, sour-dough cinnamon rolls, and seasonal overnight oats, as well

as homemade English muffins with various spreads including avocado; bacon, scallion & cream cheese; and cinnamon honey cream cheese.

The owners hope to capture the coffee-drinking habits of many of the 10,000 commuters, tourists, and local residents who drive through the downtown Austinburg intersection each day on their way to I-90 or to the Lake Erie wineries. The Station will also make a wonderful wayside for those enjoying the Western Reserve Greenway Biking Trail nearby. Outdoor picnic tables will complement the drive-through to provide seating space during the warmer months, and a bike rack will accommodate local cyclists. Walk-ups are also welcome.

The project is a family affair for the Polaks and the Bratts. Thomas Polak grew up in Austinburg

and met his wife, Clare, while in college in Virginia. They married and came back to Thomas's hometown to raise their growing family of five (soon to be six!), and then enlisted Clare's brother and sister, Wyatt and Nora, to relocate here as well. Wyatt was doing custom woodwork near Washington, D.C., and loved the idea of opening his own shop in small-town America and helping to renovate the town. Nora had put herself through culinary school and had worked in the hospitality industry. She will manage the coffee shop and eventually the café.

"Our goal with these projects is to provide the Austinburg community with quality ingredients and a beautiful place to gather without having to drive into the city. We also want to breathe new life into the center of town," says Thomas, who is also a counselor at Austinburg's Grand River Academy. "The town is right in the heart of Ohio wine country and not far from Ashtabula and Cleveland. When Clare and I were finally debt-free after graduate school, we both agreed that our goal was to invest our energies locally. We created a plan and were lucky enough to be able to purchase the property from the Port Authority after they had the gasoline tanks removed and the site decontaminated. And then the ideas just began to grow about what we could do to bring downtown Austinburg back to life."

Clare Polak adds, "We have been working on this for more than five years, and we are so excited to see Phase I coming to fruition with the opening of The Station. So many people have encouraged us along the way, including the Port Authority and the officials in Austinburg Township. Other local roasters and cafés were happy to share advice, allow us to observe their roasting process, and answer questions. It was very heartening to have so much love from other businesses. We felt like we were joining a small business club that wants everyone to succeed."

Austinburg Township Trustee Chairman Byron Dutton says of the project, "The Austinburg Trustees are proud to have 'The Station' as a new business located in downtown Austinburg. We have watched as Wyatt and Thomas, along with their family and friends, took an abandoned gas station that was an eyesore in the center of the community and transformed it into a work of art. We hope that their business grows and is everything they dreamed it would become."

The Station is located at 1760 State Route 45. Hours are 5:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. daily.

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