



City of Mishawaka

State of the City Address

February 15, 2010

Executive Summary

From a fiscal, growth, and development perspective, the best that can be said of 2009 is that the worst economic downturn since the great depression was estimated to hit bottom in the middle of 2009. To address the economy, change in the tax structure, and falling revenue, the City made some hard decisions in 2009 to weather the storm. I am pleased to report that although these have been tough times, the City has positioned itself well to move forward. Although I know a similar sentiment is being expressed by virtually every elected executive across the country, I firmly believe that what is different about Mishawaka is that our story is one of substance and not just talk.

I believe there are two areas that appropriately convey the State of our City:

- The first is the honor we received in 2009 of being recognized as the second best place in Indiana to Raise a Family, and the statistics that led to us receiving that award
- The second is the challenge of local government and how Mishawaka is different based on the level and quality of public services we provide and how our resources are managed.

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Ranked Second Best Place in Indiana to Raise a Family

In 2009, the City of Mishawaka was ranked second in the State of Indiana by BusinessWeek's annual ranking of the best places to raise your kids. Those of us who live here already know this, but I think the factors the magazine considered help to illustrate the broader picture in measurable terms of exactly how we are doing and why we are proud to call Mishawaka home.

According to businessweek.com, the selections were limited to towns that had at least 45,000 residents and a median income between \$40,000 and \$125,000. Data used included school performance, number of schools, household expenditures, crime rates, air quality, job growth, family income, museums, parks, theaters, other amenities and diversity. Affordability, safety, and test scores were given the greatest weight.

What is notable about being recognized by Business Week Magazine is that we compete with many suburban areas that are new by City infrastructure standards, with significantly higher median incomes, and virtually no poverty. Although many from outside of our community view Mishawaka as a regional area of commerce, our City also prides itself on strong, safe, and affordable residential neighborhoods.

Infrastructure/Cleanliness

Lets face it. No one wants to live in an area where basic infrastructure isn't available, or worse, an area that is in disrepair. As a City we continue to make the long term investments in our infrastructure and then maintain those investments over time.

By far the largest investments the City made and/or completed in 2009 were the Main Street Underpass and the start of the implementation of the Long Term Control Plan.



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The Main Street underpass is the core of a larger effort by the City to widen Main Street from our historic downtown to the northern City limits. This project, at close to 30 million dollars, is the single largest non-building public works project undertaken by the City. When Main Street was extended across the Indiana Toll Road in 1995, it became the major north-south arterial route through the city, connecting the city's Central Business District to major commercial and residential developments on the north to the US 20 Bypass south of the city. The underpass was necessary to help reduce traffic congestion and to improve community safety by reducing the Mishawaka Police, Fire, and Emergency Medical Services delays at the grade railroad crossing on Main Street.



Construction began in September 2007 following the acquisition and demolition of 39 commercial and residential properties. Due to the scope and cost of the improvements within the Main Street Corridor between downtown and SR 23 the work was divided into several phases. The Main Street Underpass was the key element within the corridor. Bridges are typically the responsibility of the County but continued development on the north side of the city and frequent delays for public safety personnel coupled with the new hospital on Douglas Road made the underpass one of the most important public works projects ever undertaken by the City.

As part of bringing the City into compliance with the Federal Clean Water Act, the City constructed the first projects associated with Mishawaka's Long Term Control Plan (LTCP) to reduce Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) discharges to the St. Joseph River during major storm events.

The first area selected for construction was the Milburn Boulevard Neighborhood. This area was given a high priority due to the age of the combined sewer system, high ground water table and the large volume of water infiltrating into the sewer system. The first two phases of the eight total phases had been completed by the end of 2009. Wastewater records for 2009 indicated that we pumped approximately 600 million gallons less than the previous year.

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In addition to our investments in new projects, equally important is the City's investment and maintenance in our existing infrastructure, from roads, sewer, water, and electric. These improvements were made across the board either as part of normal replacement or to increase efficiency and improve service. Despite staff reductions, the City continued to maintain services such as street sweeping and leaf collection that help make our neighborhoods a better place to live.

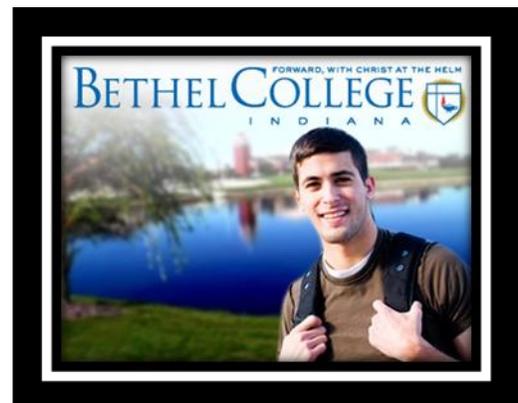
Another key challenge in maintaining a desirable place to live in older cities such as ours is addressing an aging housing stock in older neighborhoods. We do have a few problem properties in the City, but as illustrated by the relatively few properties going to tax sale, they are typically isolated and not reflective of neighborhoods as a whole. The City's philosophy of addressing problems through a combination of code enforcement and redevelopment efforts contributes to the continued health and vitality of our neighborhoods.

Affordability

One of the most significant factors in the City of Mishawaka being recognized as one of the best cities in Indiana to raise a family is how much it costs to live here. Basically, we are affordable. Information obtained from Sperling's Best Places website identifies that the median home cost in the City of Mishawaka is \$91,420. This is 18% higher than the \$77,400 median value identified as part of the 2000 US Census. Although homes in the City depreciated at roughly 4% in 2009, this trend is consistent with the troubles in the housing market and current national trends. Fortunately, 4% is better than many metropolitan areas. Compared to the rest of the country, in 2009, Mishawaka's cost of living is 27.05% Lower than the U.S. average.

Schools/Access to Higher Education

Another major factor in the City of Mishawaka being recognized as one of the best cities in Indiana to raise a family is our quality school systems and access to higher education. In 2009, School City of Mishawaka was able to increase its graduation rate. Mishawaka public schools spend \$6,349 per student. The average school expenditure in the U.S. is \$6,058. Penn-Harris-Madison School Corporation by testing



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is ranked 15th in the State out of over 300 systems. Marian High School consistently draws students from around the region as a highly regarded parochial school on the south-side of Mishawaka.

The City of Mishawaka and our Public Safety Departments are extremely committed to the education of the youth of our community of the dangers of drugs, alcohol, smoking, fire safety, crime prevention and making the right choices. We are also very grateful to the parents, teachers, principals, volunteers and administration of all our Mishawaka schools for their commitment to important programs for our Mishawaka students. The partnership that together we build as a community will make countless differences in the lives of our children and is an important part of making Mishawaka a great place to raise a family.

Mishawaka also contains or is within a few miles of multiple higher education opportunities including the world class institution, the University of Notre Dame. Centrally located in the City, Bethel College, a highly respected institution of Christian higher education, continues to be a vibrant member of the City with its emphasis on volunteering and community. Other institutions such as Indiana University South Bend, Holy Cross, St. Mary's, and Ivy Tech are also just a short commute for City residents.



Access to Healthcare

We are blessed in St. Joseph County to have two top tier hospitals, Memorial Hospital and the Saint Joseph Regional Medical Center. Of course, unless you were living outside the area in 2009, you witnessed the December opening of the new 350 million dollar Saint Joseph Regional Medical Center on Douglas Road in Mishawaka. This 633,000-square foot world class medical facility is the culmination of many years of planning and investment. Highlights of the facility, as identified by St. Joseph Regional Medical Center, include:

- 254 large private inpatient rooms provided in multiple-story towers, providing a hotel-style feel

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- a large, two-story diagnostic and treatment center and a full range of services
- A separate medical office building is connected to the hospital to provide easy access for patients and physicians.
- The 90 acre new hospital campus includes a park area with a series of ponds and walkways to promote a relaxing and healing atmosphere



For the past one hundred plus years St. Joseph Regional Medical Center has provided quality health care to our community and we look forward to their qualified physicians and staff continuing to meet the needs of our ever-growing City for another hundred years.

This project was significant on many levels and laid the foundation for building the future growth and prosperity of the City. This medical presence has already paid off with three significant medical related projects that began construction in 2009. These projects included the Hearth at Juday Creek, Michiana Hematology Oncology, and Douglas Road Nursing Homes.

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Crime Statistics/Public Safety



Another major factor in the City of Mishawaka being recognized as one of the best cities in Indiana to raise a family is our low crime rate. Although crime is unacceptable at any level, it is a reality for every City. In the City of Mishawaka, our primary goal is to continue to decrease crime levels. Our overall low crime statistics in 2009 are a testament to these continued

efforts by our Police Department and our involved citizens. The following statistics illustrate that our clean and safe neighborhood reputation is well deserved!

- One homicide occurred in 2009. This was the tragic death of William Fields that occurred in January. In this case, the perpetrator was caught and sentenced to 65 years in prison. A total of only three homicides have occurred in the last six years.
- 16 incidents of rape were reported in 2009, this is just slightly below the ten year average of 17 per year. For comparison, an identical 16 incidents were reported in 2008.
- Burglaries were down slightly in 2009 with 459 cases being reported. This is an 8% decrease over last year's 500 cases. This is still higher than the 10 year average of 428 cases per year. Although significant, this is still lower than the number of burglaries that occurred following the last economic downturn that occurred after the terrorist attacks of 9/11. In 2002 and 2003, 501 and 507 cases were reported respectively.



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- There were 2,848 cases of larceny reported in 2009. This is approximately 10% below the 10 year average of 3,154 cases. For comparison, in 2008 only 2,776 cases were reported which was the lowest level in the past decade.
- There were 748 assaults reported in 2009. This is down from the 811 cases that were reported in 2008. Assaults were 26% below the ten year average of 1015.
- Auto theft was down in 2009 with 187 cases reported, compared to 206 cases that were reported in 2008. This is 7% below the ten year average of 202 cases per year.
- 15 cases of arson were reported in 2009. This is slightly below the 17 reported in 2008. This is 37% below the 10 year average of 24 per year.
- All of these statistics are even more dramatic when you consider the decrease in the number of incidents relative to the continued growth of the City. The US Census Bureau estimates that the City's population grew by 4.9% from 2000 to 2006. Based on building permit data, the City has also added hundreds of millions of dollars of commercial development during the past decade!



Another key element of public safety that makes Mishawaka a great place to raise kids is the added security of our Fire Department. Run volume for the fire department, including fire and E.M.S.

incidents decreased 2009 to 5,183 from the 2008 level of 5,460. Total E.M.S. runs numbered 4,157.

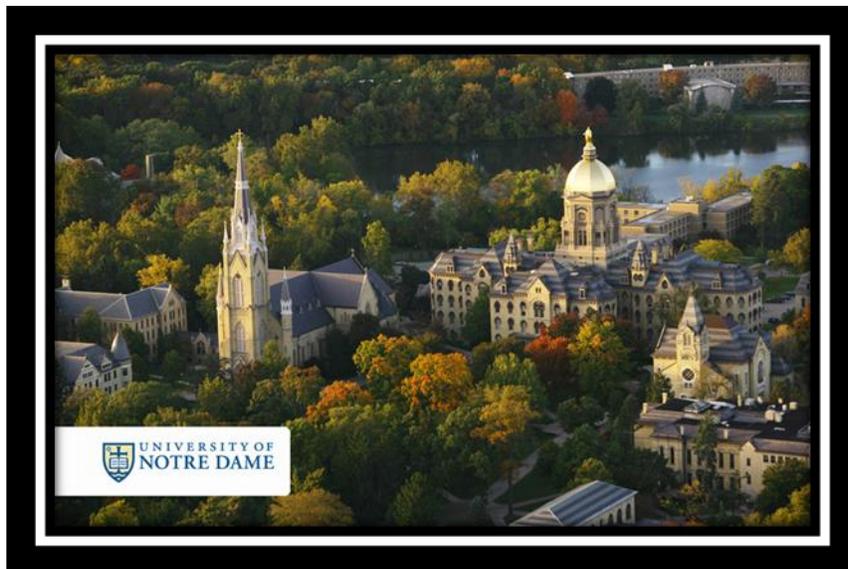
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Average response time for the year was just under six minutes (5:52) which is the time from dispatch until the first unit is on scene. This takes into account the dispatch, gearing up, and drive time. This is an excellent response time and well within the recommendation of the National Fire Protection Association.

Job Availability

Although the City of Mishawaka is more stable than other areas in our region with the increased emphasis placed on healthcare, retail, and service industries, we are still very much dependent on manufacturing and the national economy. Sperling's Best Places reports that The City's recent job growth is negative and that our jobless rate has increased by 3.70 percent in the past year. The Bureau of Labor Statistics had the unemployment rate for the South Bend/Mishawaka area at a high 11.1%. Although indicative of the overall economy, St. Joseph County has been hit a little harder based on our ties to the automotive industry, our proximity to the RV/Manufactured Home Industry in Elkhart, and the impact these net job losses have on the greater retail and service industries.



Despite these negative statistics, Mishawaka as a City is positioned well to continue to diversify and build our economy. Increases in Healthcare, retail, and the service industry, combined with our longstanding manufacturing base will continue to provide depth to

our local economy. As with many communities, the demand for technology based jobs is our greatest potential moving forward. In this regard, the emphasis on research at Notre Dame, including their

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investment of hundreds of millions of dollars to create intellectual property that will change the world bodes very well for our greater community. From a City perspective, in the coming years we will need to help to promote these endeavors where we can, and create an environment conducive to retaining these technology based companies that will start here as a result of Notre Dame's investment in this region.

Geographic area/Culture/Shopping Entertainment

These are elements that don't change every year, but they are still important components of why Mishawaka is a great place to raise a family. These components include being located conveniently near Lake Michigan, Chicago, Indianapolis, and points in between. Another benefit of living in Mishawaka is having access to other transportation resources such as the South Bend Regional Airport, TRANSPO, and the South Shore Rail Line.

An abundance of cultural amenities inherent to our region also contribute to the quality of life in Mishawaka, these include our vibrant library system, regional art and other museums, theaters, performing arts, and a variety of sporting venues.

Mishawaka is well known as the retail shopping area for the greater Michiana region, but even in this overbuilt and competitive market, we continue to see new brands come to Mishawaka. In 2009, we saw formerly empty retail space filled by national chains entering the market including HH Gregg and Christmas Tree Shops.



As businesses relocate or go out of business, others have taken their place. Despite the downturn in the

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economy, the Grape Road, Main Street and Edison Lakes commercial areas remain a successful and vital part of our larger economy.

Parks and Recreation



Another contributing factor to being one of the best places to raise a family in Indiana is the quality and abundance of our parks and the activities and opportunities they provide to our citizens. In tough fiscal times, it is a relatively common

response to cut park programs. Although some significant changes took place in 2009, the City continued to make capital investments in our park system and added programming.

During 2009, Phase III B of the City's riverwalk, the long awaited section that connects Kamm Island to Logan Street Bridge, was completed. Through our partnerships with INDOT and the Michiana Area Council of Governments (MACOG), this 1.4 million



dollar project was constructed with approximately 70% of funds coming through Federal grants. This section included over 1800 lineal feet of trail, the restoration of the historic WPA restroom, the

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reconfiguration of the boat launch, and a piling boardwalk to bridge the Wastewater Treatment Plant outfall. This was the last leg of the Mishawaka River Walk that was originally envisioned in 1991. It's been a long process, from its inception in the '91, to the beginning of construction in '97, and now to its completion in '09. A lot of hard work and effort has been contributed by a lot of folks throughout our community. We've been able to do something truly unique in this city, something that can make all of Mishawaka proud. Not many cities out there can boast a three mile long pedestrian walkway, unimpeded by traffic, passing through seven different city parks, and located right in the middle of a thriving downtown.

Park programming in 2009 included annual events such as Kamm Island Fest and Summerfest. Battell Center continued to offer a wide array of classes and community performances. In 2009, the Parks Department also added an Octoberfest event that was held this past October on Kamm Island. Overall the event was a success, but with some chilly weather, we may consider a Septemberfest for 2010.

Community Involvement/Volunteerism



Lastly, the health and vitality of a community can be measured by those who have chosen to volunteer their own time to make that community a better place. The City of Mishawaka is blessed to many individuals and organizations that contribute to making

Mishawaka a great place to raise a family. There are too many to mention in their entirety, but some of

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the groups include Bethel College, Five Star, Citizens in Alliance with Police, Cub Scout Pack #404, School City of Mishawaka, the University of Notre Dame, Friends of Beutter Park, the Mishawaka Historical Preservation Commission, River Valley Church, Vineyard Church, Mishawaka Garden Club, Michiana Master Gardeners Club, Members of LDS, Girl Scout troop #45, Friends of Hillis Hans Park, and the Japanese – American Friendship Club.

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How Mishawaka is Different

To address the economy, change in the tax structure, and falling revenue, the City made some hard decisions in 2009 to weather the storm. I am pleased to report that although these have been tough times, the City has positioned itself well to move forward.

The Federal government talks about fiscal constraint at the same time it continues to print money and place us further in debt. The State of Indiana has consistently pointed at local government as the problem, including placing caps on local property taxes while not proposing any caps on State spending and revenue. As just illustrated by the cuts required of our local schools, the State is also in the position where shortfalls can be made up by forcing mandates or cuts on others. Local government is different. Every year we are required to have a balanced budget. We don't have the ability to place burdens on future generations and are immediately accountable to the citizens we work, play, go to school and worship with.

Although I know a similar sentiment is being expressed by virtually every local government elected executive across the country, I firmly believe that what is different about Mishawaka when compared to many, is that our story is one of substance and not just talk. Our story is transparent and open for everyone to see. I would encourage all our citizens, or anyone interested to access our website at www.mishawakacity.com and click on 2009 Cost Saving Cost Cutting Efficiencies to learn more. I want everyone to understand the changes that have been made and why we have made them. After they read that list, I would also go one step further and ask anyone who has an idea on how they think the City could save, cut costs, or be more efficient to send an e-mail through mishawakacity.com, click on service request at the top of the page. The reality in these economic times and fiscal uncertainties is that we will need to continually find more cost savings and efficiencies, while trying not to cut services for years to come.

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Planning for Change

In late 2008 and early 2009, I directed all City departments to prepare a plan to meet our fiscal challenges. We enlisted support from an outside facilitator from Memorial Hospital to discuss techniques that could be implemented to alleviate the already strained City budget while simultaneously improving efficiency and quality in the deliverance of services. Although this direction came from me, each manager was required to bring the challenge back to all employees and get ideas from every level. The challenge was to cut costs, reorganize, and better apply its resources to be more efficient and not just cut people, programs, and services.

After a 6 month period of research and discussion which included a comprehensive survey of the Mishawaka community, the end result, with all 22 Departments contributing, was over 100 ways the City could change the ways that service is delivered and ways the budget could be positively impacted without reducing the service the City provides to our constituents.

Cost Saving/Cost Cutting/Efficiencies

In early summer of 2009, the City of Mishawaka began implementing the efficiencies and budget reductions in spite of the fact that they often called for painful decisions to be made, including eliminating 35 full-time positions (25 layoffs). Six City departments were consolidated and moved into various new formations, based on an assessment of which common core functions they shared. Those moves not only increased customer service by reducing the number of trips our constituents needed to make to various departments, it also allowed the City to take advantage of serious savings as a result of reducing the amount of support personnel required, reducing overhead expenses, and increasing our use of current technologies.

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In general, the Cost Saving/Cost Cutting/Efficiencies broke down into 8 categories including Revenue, Cross Training/Department Consolidation, Better Customer Service, Employee Reductions and Savings, Energy/Fuel, Vehicles/Large Equipment, Overtime Management/Savings, and Cost Cutting/Savings.

Some changes were overdue, such as raising parking fines for the first time in over thirty years. Some cost controls weren't planned, but became a necessity such as reducing the number of take home police cars. This was required as some of the vehicles in our fleet reached the end of their useful life. Without funds to replace them this required us to use more pool cars.

Representative Examples

The following are representative examples of some of the more significant Cost Saving/Cost Cutting/Efficiencies:

Property/ Casualty/ General Liability Insurance

This annually is a big cost for the City and Mishawaka Utilities, exceeding \$1 million a year. Each year we work to reduce our liability and cost. A good safety program and knowledgeable employees are a big help. Since 2005, this annual cost has reduced by 24%, or a savings of \$406,848.00.

Bar Coding on Billing Statements in the Utilities Business Office

Beginning in 2009 the Mishawaka Utilities Business Office implemented bar coding on billing statements, which has cut costs and provided more efficiency. This coding aids the Postal Service in identifying a person or location. Coding also saves time and reduces the amount of labor needed to serve customers. We introduced this new concept in March of 2009 and have seen a savings of approximately \$22,300 for the Mishawaka Utilities through the end of 2010.

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Consolidated Park Offices to Battell Community Center

In 2009, the administrative offices of the Park and Recreation Department were moved into the offices of the Battell Community Center. The consolidation allowed us to reduce staff and improve efficiencies within the department. The combined resources of the two offices have helped us open the Center again on Friday's, because of the additional staff available to man the center. Integrating our administration workforce and distributing responsibilities for programs, classes, and special events have also been an added efficiency. The use of various volunteers has also proven to be very effective and efficient in assisting in general office duties. Furthermore, simply eliminating an entire office operation and consolidating into one allows multiple savings in various general office supplies. Initially, the consolidation will save us annually \$96,497.80 in salary and benefits, and long term will generate additional savings and better delivery of services to our citizens.

Reduction in Overtime Costs

Overtime costs for the City are typically over a million dollars a year. Although emergencies or unforeseen events typically drive these costs, the better management of overtime where possible was determined as critical for controlling costs. In 2009, in excess of \$140,000 in overtime costs were saved. The Parks Department reduced overtime by \$13,075 by reducing the number of full-time employees to assist at events and rely on volunteers and management to re-route their schedules to cover services needed. The Street Department saved roughly \$11,000 in overtime costs just by elongating our paving schedule by a couple of weeks. Through contract changes and management of continuation of shift and court time costs the Police Department overtime savings in 2009 was \$106,045.00. The Fire Department had a savings of \$11,093. This was due in large part to the change in the minimum manning in the contract, the temporary move of the 2 fire marshals back to the truck, and the move of the EMS Chief from the salary position, and the update of the light duty policy.

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Health Insurance

Perhaps one budget item that is consistently on the rise is our employee health insurance cost. Due to changes in Health Insurance carriers, 2009 was a better year than 2008. Since we are self funded, the City pays the claims and administrative costs associated with the health plan. Our costs in 2009 were at approximately \$7.2million, compared to \$7.6 million in 2008. Although this is driven by claims, this was a decrease of about 4.4% as compared to our average increase over the last five years which is at 6.12%. As we look to 2010, we will continue to improve our wellness plan, monitor our health costs, increase employee education to build a more consumer driven healthcare model and maintain a plan that is consistent with those in the marketplace. In addition in 2010, we will change our Health Insurance Company to United Health Care and join the IACT Medical Healthcare Trust. We look forward to the opportunity to be a part of the Trust and our partnership with United Health Care to offer the employee's a competitive and well-rounded healthcare plan for them and their families.



Conclusion

Overall, these efforts brought about changes/cost cutting measures/efficiencies that kept Mishawaka on-pace to weather the current financial uncertainty. Collectively, these changes balanced our projected 1.7 million dollar shortfall for the 2010 budget.

Moving Forward- What to expect in 2010

I am very proud of this City, the efforts of all our employees, and the interest and caring of our Citizen's who understand that our business practices as government needed to change in 2009. 2010 is already bringing unforeseen challenges.

Fiscal Challenges

From a management perspective, in 2009 we thought we had made the decisions necessary, with ongoing stewardship, to right our financial ship. However, we received word a few weeks ago that the County only distributed 80% of the property taxes 2008 payable 2009, which was the basis for our budget projections. This 4.6 million dollar shortfall represents two and a half times the 1.7 million dollar shortfall we addressed in 2009. Although we feel that there is some kind of (likely complicated) error in the distribution, this still leaves significant financial uncertainty for 2010. Therefore, I have instructed all departments to stop all discretionary spending (not salary related) and not fill any vacancies in areas funded by the general tax levy until we better understand the problem.

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In the coming months, we will continue to work with the St. Joseph County Auditor, Treasurer, and various assessors to better understand the discrepancies so that the financial estimates are as precise as they can be for the 2011 budget.

2010 Goals

It was quite an honor to be chosen as the second best place to raise a family in Indiana in 2009. Now there is only one more step for us to take, to be the *“Best Place to Raise a Family in Indiana in 2010.”* From a local government perspective, we will continue to deliver the high quality services and programs that our citizens expect, while continuously looking for efficiencies and improvements.

Notable Public Works Projects and Construction in 2010

Some of the significant public works projects that will begin or will be substantially complete in 2010 include:

- Main Street Widening, north of Jefferson Boulevard (City of Mishawaka)
- Main Street Widening, south of Broadway (City of Mishawaka)
- Long Term Control Plan Sewer Separation in the West End (City of Mishawaka)
- Start of the Capital Avenue Underpass, south of Lincolnway at the Norfolk and Southern rail lines (INDOT)
- Merrifield park connector/Mishawaka Avenue Bridge Rehabilitation (St. Joseph County and the City of Mishawaka)

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City Changes and Financial Position

There will be a few notable milestones that will help shape our financial health going into 2011.

Specifically look for:

- The summer property tax distributions. The overall percentage collected will in part dictate the 2011 budget.
- What income will be generated from the income tax? This new tax is an unknown relative to what will actually be collected, particularly in trying financial times.
- 2010 Cost Saving/Cost Cutting/Efficiencies- Similar to 2009, all Department heads are meeting in the coming weeks to work on the next 100 changes the City can make to save money, improve efficiency and provide better service.
- Increased Reliance on Technology- The City and Mishawaka Utility web site will be updated by April to provide up to date information, to be more readable, and provide more services to the public. By the end of the year, the Park Department will be able to offer on-line registration for programs and reserve facilities on-line.

Thank You

Lastly, I want to thank all of Mishawaka for providing me the opportunity to serve. This is my seventh State of the City Address. I continue to be humbled by the trust that has been placed in me, the dedication of our employees, and the steadfastness of our citizens. God Bless the United States of America, the State of Indiana, and the City of Mishawaka.

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