

Central Services

Mike Watson, Manager

Central Services was created by merging two departments, Streets and Motor Pool, along with the grounds maintenance of the Parks Department. The Central Services Department has responsibilities that include mowing and grounds maintenance, janitorial in all City buildings, fleet maintenance, snowplowing, and street maintenance. All these tasks are accomplished by the dedicated effort of employees in the Department.

During 2013, The Central Services Department began renovating the former Scott Brass building located at 700 South Union St as its new home. This new facility meets our current needs and will accommodate future growth. The building has 144,510 square feet of space, while the previous buildings had only about 50,000 square feet, and did not accommodate equipment storage. The new building sets on approximately 11.5 acres compared to the five acres of the current site. The City closed on the property in late December of 2012. Bids were opened for renovations to the building and site improvements in 2013. The Fire Department and Electric Department will also occupy a portion of this facility which will free up room for them at their respective facilities. The Sewer Maintenance Department will also relocate its operations into the renovated building.

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Traffic

The Mishawaka Traffic Department recorded 843 event entries in 2013. These entries consisted of sign repairs, new sign installations, inspections and collection of field data. Since the inception of our Asset Management software in 2004, we have collected data on 7919 active signs, and 1109 signs removed from service due to vandalism, theft, accidents, or failure to meet federal standards.

Along with the daily maintenance and installation of signs, the Traffic Department is also responsible for pavement markings applied to road surfaces such as center lines, skip lines, fog lines, stop bars, crosswalks, and directional arrows. In 2013, we used 1540 gallons of yellow paint, 770 gallons of white paint, and 12,000 pounds of glass beads for these markings. In 2013 we purchased a Thermo-Plastic Machine as well as 6,000 pounds of plastic beads with the intent of getting longer life from our pavement markings, three to five years as opposed to a yearly painting, allowing more time to focus on other traffic related issues.

As in past years, we continue to support the various Departments in the City with their graphic needs. This reduces the cost of outsourcing projects to private businesses, saving money and turnaround time. In 2013 we designed and applied new graphics to the Police Departments squad cars.

Fleet Maintenance

It has been a very productive year for the Central Motor Pool. Our mechanics were kept busy maintaining the City’s fleet of vehicles and small hand-held power equipment. This includes over 120 vehicles in the Police Department, and all other passenger vehicles from other departments. Many of the trucks, snow plows, leaf vacs, street sweepers, loaders and ambulances, etc. fall under our service, repair and maintenance programs. The Fleet Maintenance Technicians can also assist in all the duties that Central Services delivers.

In an effort to further reduce our expenses our department has recently purchased a computerized wheel alignment and lift system. The purpose of this system is to reduce tire wear, and to ensure that vehicle travel is straight and true. The new system takes about two minutes to check the alignment on each vehicle. This will save roughly \$125.00 per vehicle.

The Motor Pool Department of Central Services also tracks the consumption for all City vehicles. The following is an overview of fuel used by department in 2013:

Department	Unleaded Gasoline (gal)	Diesel Fuel (gal)
Building	1057.3	
Code Enforcement	1140.4	
Controller	118.9	
Electric	17375.0	9141.9
Engineering	1237.8	
Fire	4850.5	25898.3
Motor Pool	1335.7	932.6
Motor Vehicle	11522.4	32135.8
Parks	7354.5	5288.7
Police	101553.7	21.2
Sewer	8327.7	5039.7
Wastewater	1490.0	354.7
Water	12653.3	3374.9
Cost/Gal	\$2.99	\$3.33
Total City Fuel Cost	\$508,351.43	\$273,685.37

Revenue from sale of used oil: \$1,371.50

Grounds Maintenance

The Central Services Grounds Maintenance is responsible for all the green areas of city-owned properties. These consist of almost 700 total acres. Within the past few years, we have been able to reduce the amount of mowing time from a nine-day rotation to a five-day schedule. Many of our projects include tree removal in City parks and areas along the riverbank, seeding of city-

owned lots, and over-seeding in parks areas. We are also in charge of the City's baseball/softball diamond maintenance, trash removal throughout the City and parks, and the set-up and break-down of special events in the City.

Grounds Maintenance is also responsible for carrying out other projects throughout the City. In the summer of 2013, we made some improvements to the Dog Park. We were having a serious problem at the watering source for the dogs. The people that use the park asked if there was anything we could do to fix this issue.

When asked if we had any ideas to help resolve this issue, our management team in Central Services suggested a pervious paver, which is a relatively new product. Teaming up with Kuert Concrete for the materials, our people were able to solve the issue and have had nothing but positive feedback from everyone that uses the park. In addition, our Dog Park project will be featured in Hardscape Magazine in early 2014.

In the fall, we play a large part in the City's Leaf Pick-up Program which is responsible for leaf removal from City streets, parks, and office properties.

During the winter months, we remove snow from nearly 8 miles of sidewalks. These areas include the Riverwalk, all City lots, business offices, City Hall, sidewalks on bridges, and all other walk ways adjacent to city-owned property. We also paint and repair all of the picnic tables for City parks and pavilions.

Motor Vehicle Highway

Motor Vehicle Highway, more commonly known as Street Department, must be factored into the workload for the Central Services Department. Much like the Grounds portion of Central Services is affected by the season, so is the Street Department workload. Spring is the time when we clean up the City from the winter debris that is left after the snow melts. Our employees take great pride in the work they perform on behalf of the citizens we serve. Our street sweepers are out for approximately nine months each year. We are in most neighborhoods, at least, once every nine to eleven working days. Spring is when the dreaded potholes keep six to eight employees busy until the weather warms up, and we can make permanent repairs. We also begin work on our list of streets that did not fare well during the winter. We must compile a list for summer street paving.

The warmer weather of the summer and fall months allow our department to paint the center lines, crosswalks, stop bars and fog lines on the roadways.

We believe our Leaf Pick-up Program is second to none

Like most citizens, we take advantage of the warmer months to perform repairs to the outsides of our buildings such as roof and fascia repair, painting and, at times, construction of new buildings in the Parks. In the fall of the year, we gear up for our Leaf Pick-up on the public streets in all residential areas. We believe our Leaf Pick-up Program is second to none. Beginning in mid-October and continuing through the end of November allows our citizens ample time to place their leaves at the curb for pick-up. Most Leaf Pick-up Programs offer pick-up only once or maybe twice, for the season. We will be in front of your home at least seven to eight times for

pick-up. This year we picked up approximately 12,000 cubic yards of leaves. Winter follows right behind our Leaf Pick-up Program, and sometimes even during the program. Clearing the snow from our public right-of-ways is the biggest responsibility for the Central Services. All aspects of travel are affected by the snow and ice on the public right-of-ways. We also believe that our snow clearing of the public right-of-ways is second to none. The employees again take great pride in keeping our roadways as safe as possible. As always, we continue to look for ways to deliver what we believe are world class services to our citizens in a more efficient and timely manner.

Building/Facilities Maintenance

It is the responsibility of the Central Services Facilities Maintenance to service and maintain over 100,000 square feet of buildings. Each department is asked submit a request for repairs, so we are able to complete and prioritize them in a timely manner. We also ask each facility to let us know if they have any major repairs, so we can determine if our employees can handle the request, or if we need to hire a contractor to have the work completed.

Each building is cleaned Monday through Friday by our cleaning crew. This year we used a new floor wax at the Mishawaka Utilities Business Office. With the use of this new product, re-waxing is no longer needed; we only need to burnish the floors once a year. We are also in the process of getting all park restrooms identical with the same flush valves and faucets, which will allow for quicker repairs.