

City of Mishawaka
2018 State of the City Address

“A Groundbreaking Year”

Mayor David A. Wood

Introduction

This is the time every year when we pause, look back over the previous year and take measure of the progress we have made and the issues we continue to face. Like most years, currently we are just trying to keep up with both the positive development and routine activities of City government. Like everything good that happens in the Princess City, the State of the City wouldn't happen without a team effort. I would like to thank Karl Kopec, Tim Brill, Brent Chupp, Ken Prince and our department managers for their help in compiling all this valuable information.

As Mayor, I get to share with you the best of Mishawaka, what is working well and what we need to work on. I will also share with you some of our future plans and opportunities. I continue to believe that we are at a great moment in the history of Mishawaka! We have challenges to be sure, but we will continue to meet those challenges head on to continue to ensure that we thrive as a city. There is more and more going on in our ever-growing City!

So, what is the state of our City? **Mishawaka continues to be fundamentally STRONG, GROWING, FINANCIALLY STABLE and SAFE.** We continue to strive to be the most livable, competitive city in Northern Indiana. We are intently focused on growing Mishawaka in an orderly fashion and having each and every resident and neighborhood prospering in our growth. I am pleased to report that for another year Mishawaka continues to build a community that our future generations can be proud of; one that is not only an attractive place in which to live, work, raise a family and retire but also to visit, shop, seek healthcare and do business in.

From a City perspective, 2017 was not just another productive year, it was by far **our best year since the start of the great recession in 2008, and one of our best years ever.** We had development announcements and construction activity from local, regional, national, and international companies looking to build or expand in Mishawaka. We saw job growth associated with expanding industries and a growing economy and we saw population growth with new housing options. Our neighborhoods continue to remain safe and stable.

As a result, the theme I have chosen for this year's State of the City is **“A Groundbreaking Year”**. Being Mayor has its ups and downs, like any job. One aspect that is really gratifying though is when the City is growing, and you are able to witness the interest and excitement that comes in the form of new bricks, mortar, and ideas realized through construction.

Homegrown Mishawaka

Our success is not possible without a great number of people contributing at every level. In 2017 life moved on in the City and I want to give well deserved recognition to a few of our homegrown citizens that have made a huge impact on our City.

Reg Wagle

Since 1984 Reg Wagle served as President of Mishawaka Parks Board of Trustees. Reg was appointed by Mayor Robert Beutter and continued serving under both former Mayor Jeff Rea and current Mayor Dave Wood. For 34 years Reg has enjoyed working with leaders who see parks and recreation as a City priority that improves the real quality of life for Mishawaka families. Reg expressed that parks are driven by the importance that creating convening places for all people, promoting interactions and engagement. Playscapes like Central Park and Camp LaSalle leverage healthier development in early ages. “The work of all children is play”, is a common quote from Reg, and during his tenure, the “play” in Mishawaka is certainly better because of his contributions!

Doctor M. Gilbert Eberhart

At the end of 2017 Dr. Eberhart was struck with a sudden inability to continue to serve on the City Redevelopment Commission in a full capacity. Gib was past President and member of the City of Mishawaka Redevelopment Commission for over 34 years from 1983 to 2017 serving under three mayors. In that time, Dr. Eberhart was part of the leadership team that drove investment in the north side of the City including the Edison Lakes Corporate Park, the Main Street Bridge construction over the Indiana Toll Road, the acquisition and demolition of the former Uniroyal properties, the construction of the Main Street Underpass under the Canadian National Railroad, the construction of the Riverwalk, and countless other projects. Mishawaka is truly a better place because of his service and dedication to the City!

Dot Wiekamp

Dorothy “Dot” Wiekamp, passed away in May of 2017. Born as Dot Stone, according to her obituary, she lived in Mishawaka, within a mile of her birthplace, all of her 103 years of life. She graduated from Mishawaka High School in 1931. She married her high school sweetheart, the late Dar Wiekamp. She and Dar lived their lives in committed to the community and prosperity of Mishawaka. Dot and Dar were great philanthropists in our community and gave generously to many worthwhile endeavors in their lifetimes. Dot was a lifelong member of the First United Methodist Church of Mishawaka and loved all things Mishawaka. She was a walking history of Mishawaka as she saw and lived every change over 103 years. Dot, you are missed but the imprint you left on Mishawaka reminds us that, as you would say, “Every Day is a Good Day!”

Lt. Tim Williams

Our own Lt. Tim Williams was chosen as the D.A.R.E. Officer of the Year for the State of Indiana in 2017! A testament to Lt. Williams’ work is that our D.A.R.E. program is thriving in our school system. This program continues to make a positive impact on our younger generations. A Mishawaka D.A.R.E. graduate finished first runner-up in this year’s Indiana D.A.R.E. State Champion essay competition. Another top award was the Mishawaka D.A.R.E.

car being picked as the winner at the National D.A.R.E. car show in Texas. Lt. Williams has been a long-time champion of our children through the D.A.R.E. program. Congratulations, Tim, on this well-deserved achievement!

Mishawaka Veterans

2017 was a great year for veterans in our region as the new state of the art, 38-million-dollar, St. Joseph County VA Clinic was completed along Trinity Place in Mishawaka this year. The City also started our Mishawaka Military Hometown Heroes Banner program. This endeavor led by my assistant Lou Ann Hazen, was created to honor and recognize military personnel (active, honorably discharged or deceased) that reside or have resided in the City of Mishawaka; those who call Mishawaka their hometown. We installed approximately 60 banners in 2017 with funds for the banners coming primarily from friends and family of the honoree without taxpayer dollars. We are currently accepting applications for the program again this year in 2018 and all of last year's participants will be displayed between Memorial Day and Veterans Day. I'd like to thank Councilman Ross Deal for formulating the idea after seeing a similar tribute in another community.

Mishawaka (CAPS) Volunteers

I'd like to thank those dedicated men and women who volunteer their time to participate in our Citizens in Alliance with Police (CAPS) Program. This program has been in operation for ten years patrolling the Riverwalk and City parks with two teams of volunteers that can be seen on event nights and the weekends. This year we had a record breaking 50 volunteers sign up for the program. Mishawaka is a safer and friendlier place because of their efforts.

School Accomplishments

Every year it seems that our schools in Mishawaka have a notable accomplishment to mention. 2017 brought another State Championship for the Penn High School Girls Soccer Team. Back to back championships are truly an achievement!

Mishawaka's own Anna Rohrer won three individual Atlantic Coast Conference titles in 2017. Competing for Notre Dame, she won the indoor track 5,000 meters and the outdoor 5,000 and 10,000 meters. Ann finished third in the NCAA Indoor Championship meet. She also won the 2016 ACC cross country title, giving her four ACC gold medals over a single school year.

Mayor's Youth Advisory Council

One of my initiatives continues to be to educate our youth about our City and show them the value of their "hometown". I want them to see what is available for their future in our City and hope that they will return after college and continue to make Mishawaka their home. The Mayor's Youth Advisory Council is a way that my wife, Jaimi, and I give back to our City; by empowering the youth of Mishawaka to have a voice and to address issues and concerns that affect them directly, not only today, but for tomorrow as well.

The Youth Advisory Council had a tremendous amount of interested students nominated by their peers, school counselors, teachers, community members and parents. The application process was rigorous with over 50 applications sent to interested students. In 2017 we gave the students

many opportunities to learn about their local government and City of Mishawaka Departments. We visited the Mishawaka Police Dept., Mishawaka Fire Dept., Mishawaka Electric Linemen Training Facility, Mishawaka Parks Department, Mishawaka Food Pantry and participated in a mock council meeting with Notre Dame law students giving advice and guidance.

The students collected money and food for their largest community service project, the Mayor’s Thanksgiving Food Drive, and again were able to provide 60 Mishawaka families in need with a full Thanksgiving dinner, as well as stock the shelves of the Mishawaka Food Pantry.

Mishawaka Police Department

There is no service provided by local government more vital than public safety. As Mayor, one of the accomplishments that I am most proud of is the fact that overall crime reporting numbers have decreased consistently in my tenure. Since taking office in 2010, every year but 2016 has had a decrease in the overall crime rate.

Crime Rate is Down...Again

I am pleased to report that in 2017, we once again had an overall decrease in crime. Uniform Crime Report statistics that are sent to the FBI data base show a decrease of 2% in overall reported crime. We had double digit number decreases in rape, robbery, assault, and larceny-theft.

Like other cities throughout the Midwest, Mishawaka continues to face an epidemic of heroin and methamphetamine cases. The MPD Street Crimes Unit has been instrumental in several arrests associated with meth production not only within the City of Mishawaka but also the City of South Bend and St. Joseph County.

Uniform Crime Report Statistics			
Offense	2016	2017	Change
Homicide	2	3	+1
Rape	33	8	-25
Robbery	64	54	-10
Assault	832	809	-23
Burglary	276	285	+9
Larceny-Theft	2,065	2,034	-31
Auto Theft	205	204	-1
Arson	5	5	0

As we move forward to fight the drug epidemic and other crimes, I am confident in the abilities of the Mishawaka Police Department. The reason we have consistently low crime rates is that our Police Department has always had a plain, old-fashioned hard work ethic. Mishawaka is strong because the men and women of the Mishawaka Police Department keep her safe.

The Mishawaka Police Department continues to do an outstanding job evolving along with the ever-changing technologies and criminal mindset of today’s world. Mishawaka’s low crime rate is even more impressive when consider of our City’s continued expansion and the constant influx of daily visitors to the largest retail shopping area in the region.

2017 Lifesaving Award

On November 16, 2017, Officer Psc. James Bartlett was advised by dispatch of a “vehicle into a pond call”. When he arrived at the scene, he could see that the rear end of the vehicle was the only part of the car not under water. When he exited his vehicle, he heard the screams of a woman stating that there was still someone in the submerged vehicle in very cold water. The rear window was still above water. Officer Bartlett swam to the vehicle climbed on top of the roof

and used his elbow to strike the rear window shattering it. Once the window was gone, the vehicle began to rapidly sink. The victim appeared through the back window and began to crawl out. Officer Bartlett, along with Mishawaka Fireman Mark Taylor, assisted in getting the victim completely out of the vehicle and then swam to shore.

Officer Bartlett and Fireman Taylor acted without hesitation to save the life of another without regard for their own safety. Because of their quick response to the situation, they without doubt, saved a life. Mishawaka recognizes their vigilance and bravery.

Mishawaka Fire Department

The Mishawaka Fire Department had another record setting year as the Department responded to 7,432 calls for service in 2017 compared to 7,201 in 2016. The greatest numbers of calls for service continue to be medically (EMS) related. Our ambulances and fire trucks responded to 5,731 calls that required EMS response. This was nearly a 4% increase over 2016. In addition, the Mishawaka Fire Department had 149 calls that involved a commercial, residential, apartment or other type of fire. The remaining 1,552 calls included requests by the public involving investigations, gas leaks, citizen assists, and a variety of other issues.

As the number of calls go up, so have the billings for the service. Collections were up for ambulance billing making 2017 the greatest revenue year to date. We collected \$1,518,428 dollars for services provided, over \$50,000 more than in 2016.

Fire Prevention

The Mishawaka Fire Prevention Bureau is responsible for inspecting buildings, new and old, to ensure the safe occupancy of the people who work in and visit them. In 2017, the Fire Prevention Bureau performed over 1,109 fire inspections of buildings in the City. Fire Investigators from the Bureau were called out 32 times to investigate commercial, residential, apartment and vehicle fires in 2017.

New Equipment

The City took delivery of two new vehicles in 2017, a Sutphen fire engine and a PL Custom ambulance. We also have plans to re-chassis a medium-duty ambulance in 2018 and purchase a new Water Rescue Response vehicle for Boat 2. We are also in the process of completing specifications that will allow us to bid a new ladder truck to replace Quint #5 which has been unserviceable and can't be re-certified. This truck should be ready for service in early 2019.

As dollars get tighter and tighter, we continue to improve the efficiency of our preventative maintenance program for our fleet. Every attempt is made to maximize the longevity of our vehicles and utilize both the resources of the City's Motor Pool as well as exploring the option of contracting out some of the more specialized fire apparatus maintenance.

St. Joseph County Consolidated Dispatch

We continue to see progress in merging the 911 operations in the county into a single, county-run, department, made up of dispatchers from Mishawaka, South Bend, St. Joseph County police and St. Joseph County Fire. On January 18th, 2017 all the dispatchers moved into their new

building and continued to dispatch for their respective organizations. On June 26th, 2017 the new Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) software was launched and the cross-training of dispatchers to serve multiple agencies began.

Following some organizational issues, in October the then Executive Director stepped in to a new role as IT Director managing the entire PSAP network. The City of Mishawaka took a proactive step and loaned our Fire Department Assistant Chief of Operations, Raymond Schultz, to PSAP while a national search was conducted. In January of 2019, Chief Schultz was offered and accepted the role of Executive Director of PSAP. We are proud of the progress that the 911 center has made in the short time under Chief Schultz's leadership. He has taken the lessons learned and Mishawaka values gained over his 23 years in the Mishawaka Fire Department and applied them to the entire County.

City Finances

Working with the Common Council in 2017, Mishawaka passed another honestly balanced budget for 2018 that provides investment in public safety, streets, and parks, while including a modest 1% plus \$500 cost of living increase for our employees. Budgets are about making choices and setting priorities. Mishawaka's success continues to be based on being fiscally conservative and not incurring long-term legacy costs that could jeopardize our stability in times of uncertainty.

General Fund

Even with losing \$4.9 million due to property tax caps in 2017, the General Fund's balance increased by \$1.66 million. Much of this increase is due to conservative budgeting. Growing the General Fund balance, the equivalent of having cash in our checking account, continues to be a priority in 2018 and beyond.

Use of the City of Mishawaka Bond Bank

Along with the new fire truck and ambulance received in 2017, our local Bond Bank, which utilizes funds received from a past legal settlement, is financing an upgrade to the Police Department's records management system. Borrowing from our own local Bond Bank which the City created saves our taxpayers money with lower interest rates and lessens the burden on our cash reserves by spreading the payments out over time. Interest paid goes back into the bond bank to grow the funds available for future City financing.

Controller Software Upgrade

The Controller's Office has transferred Mishawaka Utilities' financials to the City's software system. This transfer reduces duplicity in accounts payable entry and the time-consuming balancing of two systems is no longer necessary. The workload reduction and efficiency gained is so great that two bookkeeper positions lost through attrition have not been filled.

Property Tax Caps

Currently, property tax caps are at 1, 2, and 3% of net assessed value for residential, rental, and business owners respectively, with caps of 1 ½, 2 ½, and 3 ½% on any taxes tied to debt. Though

the City of Mishawaka does not have general obligation debt, our citizens pay taxes on debt for the schools, townships, and libraries that are in their taxing districts.

State law stipulates in 2020 that ALL of St. Joseph County's caps be reduced to 1, 2, and 3%. Good news for property owner's wallets, but a burden to schools and municipalities who must find a replacement for this funding. H.B. Umbaugh & Associates has prepared a long-term analysis of future revenue and the effects of these new caps. These losses, called Circuit Breaker Credits, are \$4.9 million in 2017. This is up approximately \$700,000 from 2016. As costs and debt grows for all taxing entities who are sharing out of the same capped percentage of revenue, and assessed valuation doesn't keep pace, these losses will be ever increasing even without the pending fiscal cliff. The current financial model funding local government in St. Joseph County is in need of serious repair.

Fiscal Cliff

In 2020, the loss with the full implementation of the tax caps is estimated to be **\$9.5 million**. Finding revenue and/or cutting millions and millions of dollars from our budget is truly a challenge. Shifting expenses to non-property tax funds and conservative budgeting are just a couple strategies we are engaging in preparation to mitigate the losses. Another option that may need to be considered in the future is an income tax increase. While not desirable, the State, in adopting property tax caps and increasing the ability to provide additional income taxes, has purposefully directed a shift in the burden of taxes from property owners to wage earners. As we continue to update the forecasted numbers we stay proactive instead of reactive in analyzing how best to increase revenue and reduce expenses to weather this fiscal cliff.

Increase in Budget Continues to be Driven by Health Care Expenses

The total Civil City budget for 2018 increased 4.55% to \$52,847,785. Despite significant efforts to make the City healthier, the health care costs for the City increased 27% to \$13,999,412. Being self-insured, the percentage increase is largely attributable to an increased number of claims for very expensive illnesses. This has also caused changes to the City's Health insurance program to change benefits to offset the increases.

As part of the 2018 budget, public safety increased 9.7%, Motor Vehicle Highway (MVH) 11%, and Parks and Recreation 0.6%. Outside of health care expenses, capital outlays and rising utility costs were primary causes for the increases. The wage increase for employees was only 1.0% and \$500 for 2018 which is roughly in line with inflation which was estimated at roughly 2.0% for 2017.

City Employee Health and Wellness Clinic

In 2017, the City of Mishawaka Activate Health Clinic saw tremendous participation from City employees and their spouses in its second full year of operation. Among the clinic's 4,728 appointments, 82% of employees and 80% of insured employee spouses visited the clinic at least once in 2017. 6,874 common medication prescriptions were filled on-site at no charge to employees as an incentive to use generics and stay healthy. The clinic expanded its hours in 2017 and has added new procedures, all of which were designed to improve the health of our workforce and contribute to maintaining the City's health insurance costs at reasonable levels.

Assessed Valuation

As I reported in past years, in 2007 the assessed valuation of the City reached a peak of \$1.75 billion. Since then, following the Great Recession, the Princess City has weathered an overall lower assessed valuation since that time. Between 2016 and 2017, assessed valuation increased from \$1,341,719,802 to \$1,391,035,674 an increase of close to 50 Million dollars. I am pleased to report that the assessed valuation increased again in 2017 to 2018 but only from \$1,391 billion to \$1,409 billion. This modest 18-million-dollar rise is concerning since there is both significant construction activity and a robust housing market. The City continues to work with the Penn Township Assessor and enFocus to analyze and make recommendations on realistic updates to processes that we believe will help provide more accurate, fair, and consistent valuations.

Excellence in Financial Reporting

For the 31st consecutive year, the City of Mishawaka was recognized in 2017 with the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for the 2016 reporting year. The Certificate of Achievement is “the highest form of recognition in government accounting and financial reporting, and its attainment represents a significant accomplishment by a government and its management.” This wouldn’t be possible without the ongoing efforts of our Controller, Rebecca Miller and her staff!

City Clerk and Common Council - the Legislative Business of the City

During 2017 the City Clerk Block’s Office and Mishawaka Common Council handled the legislative business of the City which included passing 31 resolutions, 50 ordinances, 2 annexations and 3 street vacations.

As I have said on many occasions, but bears repeating here, I believe that one of the reasons that Mishawaka stands apart from most other communities (or levels of government for that matter) is the quality of our elected officials. Mishawaka elected officials place the best interests of the City above their own interests or party politics. I think this cooperation is a direct reflection of the community we represent and the wisdom of the voters that put us in office. I would like to thank the Common Council and Clerk Block for their continued dedicated service to the City.

Central Services

When I am traveling throughout the state, I always make a point to review the condition and appearance of other cities. Like all cities, we are limited by a very fixed amount of resources, but I always believe that Mishawaka compares favorably to every other city that I have traveled to. This is due to the dedicated employees of our Central Services Department.

It is the responsibility of the Central Services Department to maintain all green areas of city-owned properties, consisting of nearly 700 acres. They also maintain 164.5 miles of roadway. During the winter months, in addition to the streets, we remove nearly 8 miles of snow on all city-owned sidewalks. These areas include the Riverwalk, all City lots, business office, City Hall, sidewalks on all bridges and all other walk ways adjacent to city-owned property.

During the 2017 season, Central Services removed 12,088 cubic yards of leaves, significantly more than the 9,300 cubic yards of leaves removed in 2016. The Mishawaka Traffic Department

recorded 895 tasks in 2017. These tasks consisted of sign repairs, new installations, inspections, field data collection and manufacturing of signs. It is the responsibility of the Central Services Facilities Maintenance Department to service and maintain over 100,000 square feet of city-owned buildings. The Department also maintains the City's fleet of police cars, fire trucks, utility vehicles, and equipment.

In addition to their normal duties, we also ask Central Services to perform some smaller construction projects to help our tax dollars go even further. Two of the construction projects accomplished by Central Services in 2017 were the Installation of the Twin Branch Playground and the placement of former street pavers in seating nodes on the Riverwalk.

Epic Flooding

In the spring of 2018 the City experienced the worst flooding I have witnessed in my lifetime. Following significant snow falls and accumulation that remained on the ground, the temperatures climbed, and a large continuous rainstorm hit the City starting on Monday February 19th. Over the next three days the City received 6.4 inches of rain while all the ice and snow on the surface of the ground melted. Although the surface accumulation melted, the ground was still predominantly frozen which prevented any significant infiltration of water. Much of the 4,685 square mile St. Joseph River watershed experienced similar rainfall and snow melt, contributing to the flooding in Mishawaka. The St. Joseph River crested on Thursday February 22nd at record levels, a half a foot above the 100-year flood level; 11.1 feet above the normal water level as measured at the city Wastewater Treatment Plant and one inch higher than the previous record flood of 1908.

Despite widespread flooding along the river and our parks systems, I am pleased to report that I am unaware of any evacuations that took place from private residences or businesses. Only a couple of roads required temporary closures for part of a day. Our neighboring communities had declared emergencies, had multiple evacuations, and roads closed for extended periods of time. In Mishawaka, I heard of numerous back-ups and basement flooding, but at no point did I hear of unfixable property damage. I believe that Mishawaka weathered this event so well in comparison because of the long term significant investments in infrastructure that have occurred over decades. Mishawaka's sewer system and wastewater treatment plant were able to stay in operation continuously and perform as designed.

One of the City's historic treasures, the Castle Manor lodge building in Merrifield Park is located within the 100-year flood plain and had the potential to be flooded and significantly damaged. Our City crews from Central Services, the Mishawaka Fire Department, and our current remodeling contractor Hoerstman Construction all contributed to the effort to save this historic structure from significant water damage. Sand bags were placed, and a temporary pump was



Castle Manor take before the flood levels peaked

installed in the crawl space which prevents significant water from entering the building and kept the floor dry despite the surrounding water level being about a foot above it.

Booming Construction!

The City of Mishawaka continued to grow and have significant investment made in 2017. As part of our groundbreaking year, the City issued permits with a total estimated construction cost of \$136.4 million, an impressive 39% increase over the total estimated construction cost of 2016 which was a good year at \$98.4 million.

Since 2013 the City had four straight years of double digit percentage growth from year to year. Coming off the recession there was a 14.4 million dollar increase between 2013 and 2014 (27%). Between 2014 and 2015 there was a 17.4-million-dollar increase (20%). The City issued permits worth \$85.2 million in 2015, a 15% increase in estimated value between 2015 and 2016. Since 2013, every year the City has had a minimum year to year growth in estimated new construction values of greater than 15% and \$14 million per year. In 2017, the City more than doubled that rate with a 38-million-dollar increase, which was a 39 percent increase over 2016.

The City continues to reap the benefits of our central, regional geographic location. Combining long-term strategic decision making such as the re-investments made downtown, the extension of infrastructure to the Exit 83 interchange of the Indiana Toll Road, and the creation of a medical hub that occurred with the relocation of the St. Joseph Regional Medical Center and the construction of the new VA Clinic; the long-term forecast in construction is still difficult to project. Although it is early in 2018, and development interest is still high, it would be difficult to project a similar booming year in 2018 to that which occurred in 2017.

Building and Development Activity

New commercial building activity increased again. In 2017, commercial permits were issued with an estimated construction cost of \$96.9 million, a significant \$10.7 million increase over the \$86.2 million issued in 2016. In addition, 21 new commercial building permits were pulled for new freestanding buildings in 2017 compared to 13 in 2016. The single largest permit was for the new Mill at Ironworks Plaza project being constructed by Flaherty & Collins on the former Uniroyal properties with a \$34 million estimated construction cost.

Construction in 2017 came from many different projects and illustrates a vibrant economy. Relative to housing, the Reserve, a project by Watermark of Indianapolis is building 300 units of larger apartments with garages made significant progress in 2017 and will be completed in 2018. The project is located at the southwest corner of where Fir Road crosses the Indiana Toll Road. The City also had two developers propose separate low income senior assisted living projects. One of those projects started construction in 2017. Silver Birch of Mishawaka is being constructed by Chicago, Illinois based Vermilion Development just south of the southeast corner of Edison Road and Hickory Road.

Commercial Building

The City also had quite a few stand-alone smaller commercial buildings started in 2017. Centier Bank built a new branch in Heritage Square. United Federal Credit Union entered our market by choosing a prime location to build at the southeast corner of Main Street and Edison Lakes Parkway. We also had a long-vacant site at the northeast corner of Ironwood Avenue and Lincolnway West obtained and developed by Dollar General with a new store.

One of the developments that excites the community is when a new restaurant comes to town. 2017 didn't disappoint in this regard. Earlier in the year, Longhorn Steakhouse was constructed on the former site of Famous Dave's BBQ across from the University Park Mall. Qdoba started construction on north Main Street. CoreLife and Bigby Coffee located into existing centers. Chase properties built a new two-tenant building on Grape Road that brought Firehouse Subs. The most excitement came when Portillo's announced they were building a new location on north Main Street which is expected to open in March of 2018.

Industrial Development

2017 also had some significant development activity on the industrial/manufacturing side. Siemens quietly made a 16-million-dollar investment in their facility located at 430 Beiger Street. Lippert Components purchased the former AM General Parts Distribution facility that was housed on the former Wheelabrator site at 408 South Byrkit Avenue. Their purchase of the former Independent Concrete Pipe site on Beiger Street also gave them significant room for expansion and will mean that hundreds of additional jobs will be housed in this location in the coming years.

Single-Family Home Construction

In 2017, one of the real bright spots was the construction of new single-family homes. In 2016, there were only 36 new homes constructed in the City. In 2017, this more than doubled to 78 new single-family homes. As indicated in previous reports, this is still lower than the number of single family starts that occurred prior to 2007 but this increase is still significant despite the continued greater demand for apartments.

Sewer Permits

Another sign of our "Groundbreaking Year" is the number of permits issued by the Engineering Department. In 2017, Engineering issued 573 Excavation Permits generating \$13,970 in fees. In addition, there were 162 Sanitary Sewer Connection and Inspection Permits issued in 2017 that totaled \$286,789 compared to \$173,320 collected from 124 permits in 2016. The increase in Sewer Connection and Inspection Permits has remained steady and is directly related to the pace of private property development.

Park Improvements

Twin Branch

Under the leadership of Park Superintendent Phil Blasko, the focus for 2017 was on improving ourselves through community engagement, partnerships, and new programming. We are proud to report that as part of our groundbreaking year the students from Twin Branch School were able to cut the ribbon on a brand new playground at Twin Branch Park, featuring inclusive play for kids of all abilities. Improvements also included new walks, a small parking lot off of Charles Street and site lighting.

Eberhart-Petro Golf Course

Although the season began with our new GPS system that gave us the capability to not only play more often during rain events and golfers may now order food from their cart. Unfortunately, that wasn't the big news in 2017 for Golf in Mishawaka. We had a chemical application error that killed the grass on our greens and ruined play for much of 2017. I am pleased to report that we installed nineteen new bentgrass greens, which will give a new fresh look and experience for the course. The newly sodded greens will improve putting and be more disease and drought tolerant. Golf is back for 2018!

Merrifield Park - Riverwalk Expansion

In 2017, the City continued to implement future expansions of the Riverwalk. The City worked with MACOG to obtain federal Transportation Enhancement (TE) funds to extend the Riverwalk through Merrifield Park. The 3-million-dollar project being built by Rieth-Riley Construction Co. will be substantially completed in the spring of 2018. The project includes the relocation of the existing access drive, the construction of the Riverwalk, creation of a more formal boat launch, pavilions, new parking, and restroom replacement. Upon completion, this section will extend the Riverwalk from the "Merrifield/Crawford Park Connector" to the intersection of Prospect and Indiana Avenue.

Castle Manor

This park building located in Merrifield Park was built by the National Youth Administration (NYA), a subsidiary of the Works Progress Administration (WPA). The building first opened in September 1941. In 2017, the City of Mishawaka undertook a substantial renovation including structural improvements, a small storage addition, metal roof, new HVAC, re-established the front porch of the structure, and added an adjacent patio. The work, being performed by Hoerstman General Contracting of Mishawaka, should be completed (simultaneously with receding flood water) in the spring of 2018. Once completed, we believe this lodge will be an even more sought-after destination with an ideal setting and accompaniments.

Battell Park - Rosemary's Garden

In 2015, the Planning Department led the effort to develop an updated master plan for Battell Park. In 2016, the City contracted with DLZ to develop plans to create Rosemary's Garden. Former Plan Commission member and Board of Zoning Appeals member Rosemary Klaer left the City just over \$40,000 on her passing with the intent of making a park improvement. In reviewing the City needs and what would make sense to accomplish, the decision was to build a passive overlook space as part of a larger regrading and signage project on the east end of Battell Park, overlooking the cable-stayed Riverwalk bridge and downtown. The space includes two custom bench swings that were fabricated by Deluxe Sheet Metal of South Bend and will be officially dedicated in the spring 2018.

Battell Community Center

Following its renovation, we are pleased the community is becoming more aware of the Battell Community Center and all that it has to offer. As a result, our evening rental space has become quite limited, with groups consistently utilizing the facility. We are active on Facebook and

Instagram, allowing us to significantly increase event and program visibility, helping us to better reach and interact with the community.

The newly designed special events have not only grown in selection, but in attendance as well. The new Battell Community Center's 'Spooky Night' was massively popular and benefited the Mishawaka Food Pantry. A few additional special events included the Mom-to-Mom Sale, Small Business Saturday Craft Market, Family Fun Nights, Brunch and a Classic Movie, Winter Concert Series, Grandparents and Me Series, and National Coffee with a Cop Day.

Recreation - Youth Sports

With the expansion of our youth sports programming, we are experiencing positive momentum in the recreation division. The new energy is coming from the implementation of new t-ball, cross country, flag football, winter skills clinics, volleyball, and three soccer leagues. These new programs have grown in popularity, allowing us to connect with school age children, a population that we have worked hard to involve more consistently.

We also believe there is a greater regional opportunity that remains untapped. Travel leagues represent a great untapped opportunity for the region to boost tourism and hotel stays. Currently, Visit South Bend/Mishawaka is evaluating the responses they have received in a formal "Request For Interest" they released in the Fall of 2017. As part of the City of Mishawaka submission, we encouraged them to look at a site adjacent to Juday Creek Golf Course where the predominance of hotels and restaurants would have a complimentary effect on the existing regional destination on the north side of Mishawaka. We are hopeful that this site will be seriously considered as the process moves forward.

Special Events

I am a firm believer that special events greatly contribute to the quality of life of our community. In 2017, our first ever Independence Day Celebration was held with a crowd of nearly 10,000 people spanning Central, Beutter and Kamm Island Parks. The day-long festival was filled with events and activities for people of all ages. The Mishawaka Heritage Festival continued paying homage to the ethnic, religious, and industrial heritage of the Mishawaka Community and featured local musicians, food vendors, and a new decorated bike parade. Our Winterfest experienced one of its largest crowds, which featured a new winter wonderland for Santa and the Elf Spaghetti Eating Contest. The Summer Concert Series was as popular as ever, featuring free family friendly music at Beutter Park, the Battell Park Bandshell, and the Eberhart Golf Course Clubhouse Deck.

Community Development

In 2017, a portion of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) federal funding that we receive was utilized for Public Infrastructure to continue with curb, sidewalk, drive approaches and ADA ramp replacement. The improvements were made along Elizabeth Street from Lawrence Street to Battell Street and along Ann Street from Grove Street to Broadway. The total investment was close to \$200,000. In 2017, our Community Development staff also worked to reallocate some of funds to demolish the Mary Gibbard Pool complex. By using these funds for demolition, the local City budgeted funds are able to go further toward the replacement improvements for the park.

CDBG funds were also used in 2017 to provide grants to the YWCA Domestic Violence Program, the REAL Services Adult Guardianship Program, the United Way Kindergarten Readiness Program, the Boys and Girls Club, and the Mishawaka Food Pantry.

Mishawaka Food Pantry Community Garden

The City of Mishawaka, in partnership with Penn Township and the Mishawaka Food Pantry, constructed a garden at the southeast corner of Hill Street and Lincolnway West in the spring of 2017. The site is located immediately west of the Mishawaka Food Pantry located at 315 Lincolnway West. The project included 14 raised planting beds that are being used to provide fresh vegetables for the Food Pantry. The project also included outside tables, a bike rack, decorative fencing, and plantings. In 2010, the City reached an agreement to purchase the former brake shop/service station at 327 Lincolnway West. The site was cleared in 2011 and was reviewed for potential redevelopment opportunities. The small size of the property and its location adjacent to the pantry made the garden an ideal use of the property.

Student Weekend

Through Community Development, funds are provided for materials for the Summer of Service Student Weekend. This event encourages youth volunteers to connect with the community, beautify the city, and touch the lives of Mishawaka residents. On June 19 and 20, 2017, students gathered at Bethel College along with supervisors to clean, rake and re-mulch. Given this year's flooding we are hopeful for their return in 2018!

Protecting Neighborhoods - Code Enforcement

Mishawaka has always been known for its clean and well-kept neighborhoods and neighborhood stability remains a priority. Vacant or blighted structures can become a haven for criminal activity and other undesirable issues that can have a very negative impact on a neighborhood. As a City, the quick and remedial action taken on a daily basis for these types of properties helps prevent the deterioration of neighborhoods. Code officers investigated a total of 5,803 public nuisance cases in 2017 ranging from tall grass, peeling paint, to substandard structures. 5,419 cases were closed with the violations remedied. It is important to note that to close these cases code officers had 10,211 follow-up inspections.

Continued implementation of our Top 100 Program is one of the reasons why you won't see many substandard structures in Mishawaka. This yearly initiative begins in the winter months when the code officers scout their areas in search of the houses, garages, or commercial buildings that need the most attention. In the spring the code office will begin contacting the property owners in question and point out the issues to them. In 2017, Code was able to bring 71 of these structures into compliance. The Top 100 program has played a huge role in the continued clean and maintained overall appearance of Mishawaka.

Public Infrastructure Projects

We continued to both build and repair infrastructure in 2017. Our Engineering Department does a masterful job of organizing our design consultants and contractors to make sure that as we spend money on capital improvements, they are designed and built with the future in mind.

Community Crossings Grant

The State of Indiana conceived the Community Crossings Grant program in 2016 to help address maintenance issues with roadways throughout the State. In August 2016, the City was granted \$767,500, which we were required match equally with City funds, for three project locations within the City. The match required for this grant is also one of the reasons why MVH increased 11% this year. The 2017 projects included Grape Road from Indian Ridge Boulevard to Day Road including the intersection of Grape Road and Day Road, Dragoon Trail from the western City limit to the eastern City limit with the improved sections omitted, and portions of McKinley Avenue.

Due to the high volume of traffic on Grape Road, all milling and asphalt paving operations were performed at night. Damaged or failing curb and gutter throughout the project limits were removed and replaced. For the Dragoon Trail project, some areas required structural patching prior to milling or scarifying. As grant and matching funds were limited, the McKinley Avenue project was shortened to only include Charlotte Street to 500' east of Division Street.

These three projects were completed in 2017 with a total investment of \$1.55 million. A ribbon cutting for these projects was held on Friday, August 11, 2017. In 2017, the City applied for the second year of Community Crossings Grants and received an award of a \$650,000 matching grant for 2018 construction of various streets throughout the City.

Summer Street Paving Program

The Engineering Department and Street Department coordinated 23,000 linear feet of street milling, sealing, and resurfacing in 2017. The streets were milled from curb to curb to remove 1" to 1.5" to retain as much curb exposure as possible. Milling expenses totaled \$154,000, resurfacing totaled \$501,000, sealing totaled \$47,000, pavement markings totaled \$23,000, and concrete work totaled \$29,000, for a total summer street paving program investment of \$754,000.

Curb and Sidewalk Program

Instituted in 1986, this program encourages single-family homeowners to repair or replace deteriorated public curb and sidewalks adjacent to their property and provides for a 50/50 split of the repair cost of curbs, sidewalks, and drive approaches between the homeowner and the City. This year a total of \$316,100 was invested in neighborhoods on curb and sidewalk improvements.

Douglas Road Improvements - Phase I

The City's recent annexation, subsequent acquisition of the Juday Creek Golf Course, and plans for the proposed Northeast Well Field emphasized the need for improvements to Douglas Road from its current County configuration. The design of a five-lane concrete street was initiated in August 2016 for Douglas Road from Fir Road to the eastern City Limits. The design plans include two travel lanes in each direction with a center left turn lane, stormwater management that is sensitive to the adjacent Juday Creek, sanitary sewer extension, water main extension, concrete curb and sidewalk, street lighting, and buried utility conduits. Due to the magnitude of utility coordination, a phased approach to the project was necessary. Phase I construction began

in August 2017 and includes utility extensions, stormwater management, and subgrade preparation.

Linden Area Long Term Control Plan Improvements

The Linden Area Sewer Separation is an element of the Long-Term Control Plan (LTCP) that in part requires separation of 152 acres of existing combined sewers in the Linden Area. The plan, which is separate from the previously planned tunnel, includes the area south of the St. Joseph River roughly bounded by Merrifield Avenue, Fourth Street, and Roosevelt Avenue. The plan consists of three main components: rehabilitating the existing combined sewer system to act as a separated sanitary sewer system; construction of new separate storm sewer systems including a new storm outfall to the St. Joseph River; and converting the existing combined sewers to storm sewers.

In 2017 projects included the continuation of the 66” storm sewer in Club Boulevard to Byrkit Avenue and in Byrkit Avenue from Club Boulevard to Linden Avenue. A separate phase included the continuation of the storm sewer on Linden Avenue from Victoria Street to Miami Club Drive and Victoria Street and Miami Club Drive from Linden Avenue to Lincolnway.

The last phase constructed in 2017 included the continuation of the existing 60” storm sewer with 42” storm sewer on Byrkit Avenue between Sixth Street and Eighth Street. The total investment for these three projects in 2017 was over 3.3 million dollars.

These Linden Area improvements were also necessary in anticipation of the second phase of the Twelfth Street Improvement Project, from Downey Avenue to Campbell Street, which will allow a storm outlet for the planned improvements on Twelfth Street. It was critical to complete these Linden Area projects as scheduled to not jeopardize the funding in place for the planned Twelfth Street Improvements.

Twelfth Street - Phase II (Campbell Street to Downey Avenue)

The design for Phase II of the improvements on Twelfth Street, between Campbell Street and Downey Avenue, was completed in 2017. The additional right-of-way was acquired along the length of the project throughout 2016 and finalized in early 2017. Through 2017, utility relocation plans were reviewed and permits issued to multiple utility companies to complete their relocations before project bidding in July 2018. This is why the number of utility poles has temporarily doubled along this section of 12th Street. The project will widen Twelfth Street from its present two lanes to three lanes including a continuous center left turn lane. The street will be reconstructed along with curb and gutter, storm sewer, traffic signal, and street lighting. The construction is estimated to cost \$7.5 million, with 80% being federally funded. Due to the federal procedures for design, right-of-way acquisition, and utility relocation, it is anticipated that this project will begin construction in late summer 2018 and be completed early in 2020. We also received word in 2017 that the funding for Phase III, which is the area between Dodge Avenue and Campbell Street, was programmed with 80% federal funding with an anticipated start date of 2023. The estimated project cost of this third phase with inflation is approximately 9 million dollars.

Signage and Wayfinding

In 2017 the City completed a number of signage projects. The City partnered with the School City of Mishawaka to install a new monument sign at Mishawaka High School that included an electronic reader board that will allow the City and School system to work together in advertising community events, and as necessary emergency messages such as Amber alerts.

In cooperation with Visit South Bend/Mishawaka through the hotel/motel tax board that provided \$100,000 grant, the City installed new branding and wayfinding signage. Given that Mishawaka serves as the commercial shopping and service hub of the region, the wayfinding and branding signage should provide some assistance to those who are new or visiting the area to find their way around.

Cemetery Fencing / Streetscape

In 2017, the City moved forward with a project that had been envisioned for a number of years. For decades the section of Jefferson Boulevard and Liberty Drive streetscape adjacent to three different cemeteries was a negative image for the community from the predominance of rusted barbed wire chain link fencing that was in various stages of disrepair. The City reached out to the board of Fairview Cemetery and the diocese for the Catholic Cemetery to obtain additional easements and permission to close Fairview's signalized access at the intersection of Jefferson Boulevard and Liberty drive. The third cemetery, the City Cemetery, didn't have room to donate easements, but was in need of improvements in the same manner as the other two. Based on the age and records, we actually had to probe for grave sites to make sure the proposed improvements would not be in conflict. The end result was that the City installed over $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile of decorative black fencing and provided a few extra feet of precious sidewalk space for pedestrians. The streetscape is now an appropriate and respectful tribute to the great number of our citizens who have been laid to rest in these sacred places.

WPA Stonework

In 2017, the City continued with the repair of some of the historic Works Progress Administration (WPA) depression era stonework in the City. Specifically, the Petro Park Shanower Drive Arches were restored along with a bench in Battell Park and other work. The Roosevelt Administration in the 1930's believed that the only way to improve that morale of the country and return life "back to normal" was to create work programs that required people to get back to their Protestant work ethic roots and collectively work together to reverse the direction of the country. The relief-era projects that were built throughout the City of Mishawaka park system helped to put citizens back to work and foster a positive energy and environment within the community. These are important artifacts of the City's history and we will continue to make investments in restoring the best of this work.

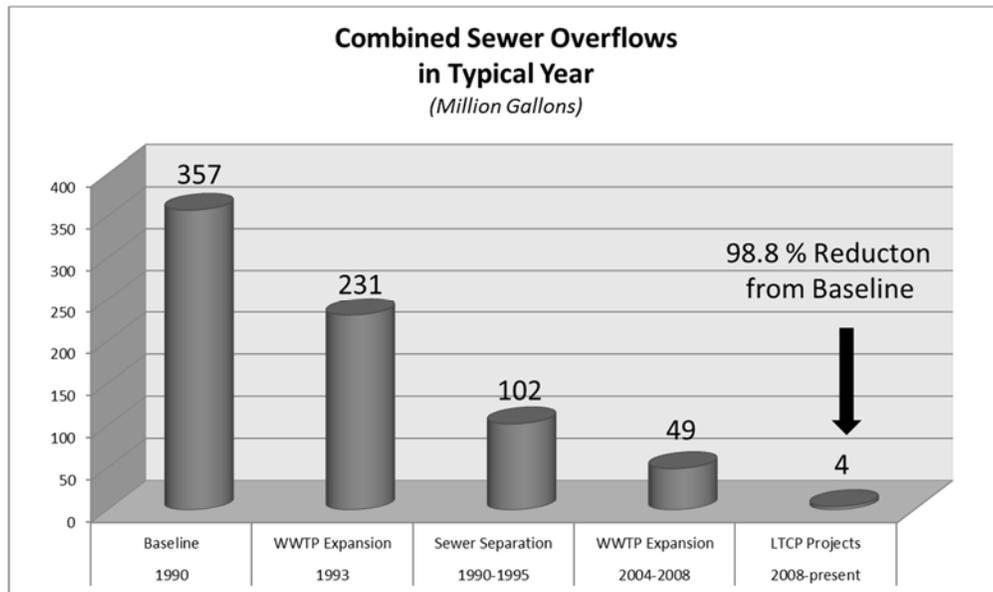
Wastewater LTCP

The City of Mishawaka is one of 103 communities in Indiana with combined sewer overflows. The City's Wastewater Treatment plant discharges treated wastewater into the St. Joseph River, an interstate waterway and the third largest tributary to Lake Michigan.

Like other Indiana communities, Mishawaka was developed with a combined sewer system (CSS). During large storms the CSS, which carries both sewage and storm water, can become inundated resulting in discharges of raw sewage into the St. Joseph River. The Clean Water Act (CWA) requires cities with combined sewer systems to develop long-term control plans to reduce or eliminate discharges of combined sewage. Mishawaka’s LTCP was entered into a Federal consent decree in May of 2014.

Over the last 27 years, Mishawaka has reduced its combined sewer overflows to 4 million gallons in a typical year. This is a 98.8% reduction from the baseline. Studies have shown that eliminating the remaining 1.2% of Mishawaka’s CSO volume would result in no measurable improvement in river water quality. The CWA and US EPA require a level of CSO control where the cost of compliance surpasses the point that results in an equivalent environmental benefit. The cost to get the last 1.2% cannot be justified. The phenomenon of diminishing marginal returns is common when dealing with water pollution controls. The incremental costs often far exceed the incremental benefits to eliminate the last CSOs. The bottom line is that if LTCP improvements are required to be built as currently mandated, the average home could have a sewer bill alone that exceeds \$130 a month. This is entirely unacceptable to me based on our understanding that the end result would not measurably improve the water quality of the St. Joseph River and would be crippling relative to the modest means of most of our citizens.

Mishawaka has begun discussions with EPA, the State of Indiana, and the Department of Justice to renegotiate an affordable, justifiable endpoint that will protect the environment while not financially burdening the citizens of Mishawaka. This is my top priority as your Mayor!



My ultimate goal is to save the City and our ratepayers many millions of dollars. We have developed a great negotiation strategy with our team of experts. Our aim is to greatly reduce the burden and liability that ultimately we would all have to bear. We are reasonably optimistic that some good ol’ Princess City common sense will prevail. If it does, we will save many millions of our ratepayer’s dollars collectively.

Mishawaka Utilities Water Division

As 2017 ended the Mishawaka Utilities Water Division was close to completing final design on our new 2-million-gallon reservoir. Bids should go out in May with construction beginning in late summer or early fall. Total construction time is 18 months to 2 years. There will also be a new booster station and 7000' of water main associated with this project, along with rehabilitation of our 89-year-old, 3-million-gallon reservoir. This will increase our system storage by 2 million gallons and give our system greater redundancy.

Planning for our new wellfield at Juday Creek continued. We ran a pilot treatment plant in 2017 to determine the best treatment process. The study was a success and we have a good plan moving forward. We are currently designing the treatment plant layout and building design. The plan is to be breaking ground in late 2020 or early 2021 on our new wellfield and treatment facility.

2018 should be another exciting year, as our crews will be kept busy updating existing infrastructure, including the removal of old lead services and adding new infrastructure as Mishawaka continues to blossom and grow.

Mishawaka Utilities Electric Division

The Electric Division continues to serve over 26,000 customers and employs 46 people. Our division is segmented into 4 departments - Engineering, Construction, Metering and Operations. We are members of the Indiana Municipal Electric Association and our apprenticeship program and lineworkers are recognized worldwide as a model program, commonly finishing in the top ten in competitions both nationally and globally. Our division holds monthly safety and training meetings, and all linemen are trained annually in pole top and bucket truck rescue.

2017 included the IMEA State Lineworkers Rodeo that occurred at beautiful Central Park right here in Mishawaka on September 15th and 16th. With the help of other City departments, one of the most beautiful parks in the state was transformed into a pole climbing competition ground for events that showcased some of the most skilled utility linemen from Indiana and surrounding states. This event demonstrated to our city's residents the training and skill sets required to provide our customers with the world class service that the Electric Division strives to provide.

In 2017, the engineering and substation departments continued to provide reliability and performance enhancements. Installation of a new switch gear at the 4th Street Substation allowing us to take the station offline without de-energizing the 34.5k feed to Wastewater. We installed a new primary circuit allowing us to feed the St. Joseph Regional Medical Center from our Russ Substation if our Grape substation was to go offline.

As energy costs continue to rise, Mishawaka customers continue to enjoy affordable residential rates, remaining slightly below the rates of the surrounding communities.

12-thousand-volt (12kv) upgrades needed

Traditional 4kv distribution circuits are becoming obsolete due to the expansion of utility networks and the ever-increasing demand for electrical power. The industries tendency to upgrade to higher voltage systems like 12kv has led to 4kv equipment shortages and consequent

price increases. Most of our 4kv equipment has reached or exceeded its design life. Many manufactures have stopped maintaining their 4kv equipment inventories, so longer lead times are required to obtain new equipment. The City is looking to upgrade from 4kv to 12kv that will provide some savings from reduced line losses; however, the most significant impact would be system reliability. The cost of this upgrade is expensive estimated to be 60 million dollars. Our goal for completion is 12-15 years, however this timeline will be dependent on other infrastructure demands and available funding. We hope to begin the process in 2018, with the Union St. station being first upgrade.

Coming in 2018

Every year one of my privileges as Mayor is to identify the upcoming projects that are coming in the near future. 2018 and beyond does not disappoint!

Douglas Road Improvements - Phase II

Phase II of the Douglas Road Improvements will include a five-lane concrete street with two travel lanes in each direction with a center left turn lane, stormwater management that is sensitive to the adjacent Juday Creek, concrete curb and sidewalk, street lighting, and buried utility conduits. Due to the complexity of the corridor, the sanitary sewer, stormwater, and water main improvements have been constructed through Phase I in 2017. Phase II is scheduled for construction in spring 2018 with an estimated completion in the fall 2019. The total City investment is estimated to be \$3.5 million.

Veterans Parkway and Northeast Well Field utility access

In conjunction with the Douglas Road improvements, the City has committed to provide utility access for the proposed Juday Creek Well Field and construct Veterans Parkway, which will extend north from Douglas Road to Juday Creek. The project will also include a bridge over Juday Creek, gravity sanitary sewer main, water main, stormwater management, and street lighting. The design of Veterans Parkway progressed through 2017 and found it to be more cost effective to include the parkway project as part of the Douglas Road, Phase II bid process, which is scheduled to bid spring 2018. The City's investment is currently estimated to be \$4 million.

Mary Gibbard Park

The Mishawaka Parks Department recently bid and awarded a construction contract for the long-awaited improvements to Mary Gibbard Park. The project should be open mid-summer of 2018. The park will include an updated playground including areas for inclusive play, open play areas for youth sports and new walking paths. The renovations will also feature a new splash pad, a small BMX bike park, a pavilion, and a new restroom. The overall investment to accomplish these improvements will be in excess of 1.5 million dollars.

Central Park Stage

The City is working with Arkos Design and Lawson Fisher Associates to design a new permanent stage for Central Park. The stage will be located at the south end of the looped walk surrounding the event lawn on the west side of the park. The goal is to have the platform portion constructed to allow the summer concert series to be held in Central Park for the next two

summers as the construction adjacent to Beutter Park significantly limits parking and access to Beutter Park. The roof of the structure and completion of the project will likely occur in the fall of 2018, following this year’s concert series.

Mishawaka Fitness Court

I am pleased to report that the City has met its goal! We will be constructing a new, outdoor fitness court in Central Park in 2018. The NFC Fitness Court™ is a world class outdoor gym re-imagined to fit in and transform modern public spaces. The NFC model uses an outdoor fitness court and combines a simple, seven-minute, high quality workout with connected, digital platforms to promote fit communities through bodyweight circuit training. We believe that the Riverwalk is the perfect place for people to walk, run, and workout for free! This project is one of the first of its kind in the State of Indiana and the equipment will be purchased without the use of taxpayer dollars thanks to Patronicity. In this case \$35,000 was raised by community sponsors and interested citizens allowing us to receive a dollar-for-dollar matching grant from IHCD’s CreatING Places program.

Digital Art Sculpture

As part of the Flaherty & Collins Mill at Ironworks Plaza project currently being constructed on the former Uniroyal properties, the City reserved a space at the northwest corner of the intersection of Mill Street and Front Street to place public art. We didn’t just want a traditional public sculpture, but something that would fit with the urban contemporary vision we have established for the downtown, that is still mindful of our past. The City, working with a software application company, Ugray, has envisioned a digital art display where LED screens would be used to display a Princess Mishawaka character. The scenes and images of the character are intended to change based on the time of day and potentially the weather. The idea is to have a dynamic changing art piece that is modern and cool, symbolic of the spaces being created in downtown Mishawaka. Our inspiration was “Ann Dancing” which can be found in Indianapolis along the Cultural Trail. This project will likely be installed in 2019, concurrent with much of the site work and occupancy of the buildings on the Flaherty & Collins project.



Picture of Ann Dancing and an artist concept of Princess Mishawaka

Riverwalk - Race Street to Cedar Street Bridge

In 2017 the City continued to take strides to expand the City's Riverwalk system. The most impactful decision was to proceed with the acquisition of two properties that came up for sale by the previous owner that were immediately adjacent to Cedar Street to the west. The City acquired the single-family home located at 209 north Cedar Street from the Center for Hospice Care, who in acquiring the property from the previous property owner offered higher than appraised value as an incentive for that owner to sell. The acquisition of this property allows for the immediate connection of the Riverwalk to Cedar Street on the north side of the river. Previously, the Riverwalk connected to Madison Street because of the City's inability to acquire this home. This walkway should be constructed in the spring or early summer of 2018.

The City also acquired the Quilting Loft, a commercial business that was located at the southwest corner of the intersection of Lincolnway and Cedar Street. This was the last "full" property that was required to make the connection from behind the Police Station at the dead end of Race Street to connect to Cedar Street on the south side of the river. Since acquiring these properties the City has entered into a professional services agreement with DLZ of Indiana to finalize preliminary plans that would allow the City to start making offers on the partial properties needed to complete this section of the Riverwalk. We also had DLZ submit an application to receive federal funding for the widening of the Cedar Street Bridge to accommodate a wider protected walkway on the west side of the bridge. This application was made possible by the City's acquisition of these two properties. Our understanding is that based on the limited availability of federal funds being provided to this region, right now the soonest this bridge widening could be funded would be in 2023.

Regional Cities Phase II

In August of 2017, the City submitted an application to the Regional Development Authority to fund a second Regional Cities project in Mishawaka. Although over a million dollars was being requested, only a \$114,000 was awarded to the City.

The idea of the project was to tie the momentum of the Townes at Kamm Island project and the planned Riverwalk Apartment project together to leverage an amenity that would contribute to spurring similar development and help retain and attract talent in our region. The funding we have been approved for has been allocated to Beutter Park Phase II.

For the past 15 years in marketing downtown Mishawaka for redevelopment, one of the concerns that has been routinely brought up has been the apparent minimal activities that are available in winter. This is viewed as a negative, not only for Mishawaka's downtown, but for the region as a whole. We routinely hear that the one thing we can't change is the weather. One thing we can change is our collective attitude toward the weather and its impact on how livable our region can be.

The thrust of this request for Regional Cities funding is to address this need as part of the completion of the City's signature urban park. If completed as envisioned, we believe that the park will be a year-round attraction and will become one of the hallmark "things" to do in the region.

The design as currently envisioned includes a variety of components:

Signature Café

One of the elements that separate the proposed improvements from other park venues is the type of café envisioned. Although owned by the City, this would be leased to a private entity, likely below market rate in order to incentivize providing a unique eatery/coffee house/dessert/evening drink destination. A modern décor of glass steel and wood with stone accents is envisioned. The Café will have its own outdoor seating area and will contain an outside fireplace contributing to the winter ambiance and activities.

Ironworks Plaza

In coordinating with Flaherty and Collins, the developer of the Mill at Ironworks Plaza project, the plaza, set in the middle of Beutter park off of Ironworks Avenue is set up as a pedestrian friendly open area with a modern large tent event area that will be used for a variety of activities including registration for runs, outdoor performances, markets, and even weddings.

Skating Path / Winter Activity Area

The skating path winter activity area, not only provides an activity, but in connecting it to the Signature café, the close location of other restaurants, the downtown, and the Riverwalk, the amenity has the ability to attract people even if they are not directly participating in the skating. We love Elkhart's NIBCO park, and wanted to use a similar theme but place it in an environment with a diversity that adds to the attraction. We are looking at this as a Mishawaka scaled version of Rockefeller Center. The urban setting, the café, the art, the immediately adjacent housing and restaurants all contribute to the activity. The skate portion of the building will have lockers, warming area, skate rental, and room for maintenance, mechanicals, and Zamboni storage. If constructed, this facility will likely replace the City's current rink in Merrifield Park which is at the end of its life and is in need of replacement.

Picnic Area / Beer Garden / Restrooms

We felt that eating and drinking outside in an urban park was a critical component. Serving liquor requires the area to be separated from the other areas during events, but on a year-round basis the area would be used for picnics and seating. This will replace the existing temporary asphalt area with picnic tables that has looked unfinished since it was placed in the park more than a decade ago.

Cable-stayed Bridge Lighting

Since its erection in 2008, Mishawaka's cable stayed bridge has been one of the iconic images reflective of our community. As part of this project, we would like to emphasize the night time image to convey the activity of the space. The way the river lights project brought renewed activity to downtown South Bend, we feel that adding this lighting will have a similar effect in downtown Mishawaka.

Habitat for Humanity - Carter Work Build

I was originally hoping to announce this event at last year's State of the City Address but couldn't because of the timing of the announcement from Habitat for Humanity. So now, I am

pleased announce that the Habitat for Humanity Jimmy & Rosalynn Carter Work Project is occurring in the City of Mishawaka in 2018. This build, that has occurred internationally, is coming to Mishawaka in part to honor the contributions of local architect Leroy Troyer who has been a family friend of the Carter's and a contributor on the "Carter Work Build" project from the beginning.

The location at the northwest corner of the intersection of Byrkit Avenue and Jefferson Boulevard has taken shape with much of the necessary infrastructure being installed in 2017. We are proud to partner with Habitat for Humanity of St. Joseph County to bring a brand new neighborhood to Mishawaka that will bring many new families to the City in an area served by School City of Mishawaka. The City contributed part of the infrastructure improvements needed for the project totaling roughly \$300,000.

The build week will take place August 26-31, 2018 and volunteers should be able to sign up now. Having personally traveled to participate in this event, it is truly a spectacle worth participating in! The build will likely involve thousands, with more than 500 people a day on site. As in the past, we expect that Country singers Garth Brooks and Trisha Yearwood will join hundreds of volunteers from around the world for this one-week building blitz.

CONCLUSION

Summary

Although my summary highlights some of our ongoing efforts, I would encourage everyone interested to read the full reports provided by each City Department for a much more complete perspective. Yearly, I am pleasantly surprised by what our Departments are able to accomplish and think you will be as well.

Thank you

Personally, I want to thank all of Mishawaka for providing me the opportunity to continue to serve. I am humbled by the trust that has been placed in me. My service as Mayor continues to be the honor of my lifetime. I love Mishawaka and look at its citizens as part of an extended family. It is also my privilege to work shoulder-to-shoulder with the finest public servants anywhere. Together, we will continue to work to make decisions today with an eye toward future generations. I believe greatness continues to lie ahead of us! May God continue to bless you, our citizens and our great City of Mishawaka.