



MISHAWAKA COMMUNICATOR



A LETTER FROM MAYOR DAVE WOOD



Responsible Leadership. Lasting Value. The Mishawaka Way.

Each year the Indiana General Assembly meets to debate policies that shape the future of communities across our state. The 2026 legislative session has now concluded, and as always, our administration worked diligently to ensure the voice of Mishawaka was heard.

The most significant policy change affecting local governments remains **Senate Enrolled Act 1 (SEA-1)**, the major property tax reform adopted last year. The law provides property tax relief for homeowners through expanded homestead deductions and new credits that may provide up to **\$300 in annual property tax savings** for many homeowners, with additional relief for some seniors.

While these changes provide meaningful relief for taxpayers, they also slow the long-term growth of—

—property tax revenue for cities and towns. That reality makes responsible financial planning more important than ever for communities like Mishawaka.

During the 2026 legislative session, lawmakers also considered several proposals that would have dramatically altered local government finances. For example, **House Bill 1288** proposed eliminating Indiana’s property tax system entirely and replacing it largely with expanded sales taxes—an approach that would have created major uncertainty for local services and infrastructure funding. Fortunately, that proposal did **not advance**.

HB 1001 proposed to effectively eliminate residential zoning, thus creating significant quality of life issues for our residents. Gratefully, cooler heads prevailed and as a result much of HB 1001 did not come to pass. Thanks again to significant input of AIM and municipal leaders throughout the state and their significant input, advocacy involvement and time commitment.

Importantly for cities, legislators also discussed improvements to the **local income tax system**, which was restructured under SEA-1.

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UPCOMING EVENTS



April 3
Good Friday
Offices Closed



May 2
Derby Day
Ball Band Biergarten



May 9
Girls Night Out
Ironworks Event Center



May 14
Bike Week
Mary Gibbard Park



May 15
Indian Bike Night
Ironworks Plaza



May 16
Kids to Park Day
Hillis Hans Park

A LETTER FROM MAYOR DAVE WOOD (CONT.)

Several proposals, including legislation such as **HB 1259**, aimed to give cities and towns more flexibility to use unused income tax capacity to maintain essential services.

While not every proposal passed this year, the session ultimately avoided several changes that could have created significant fiscal disruption for local governments. That stability allows Mishawaka to continue planning responsibly for the future.

But responsible leadership does not end at the Statehouse. It is reflected in the services residents experience every day.

One of the most important measures of a city's success is simple: **Can families afford to live there while enjoying a high quality of life?** In Mishawaka, the answer is yes.

Thanks to decades of careful planning and disciplined financial management, our residents benefit from reliable public services delivered at some of the most affordable utility rates in Indiana. When you combine the cost of **water, wastewater, and electric service provided by Mishawaka Utilities**, our overall utility costs rank among the **most affordable 25 percent in the state**.

In fact, independent analysis conducted during our recent rate review confirmed that **Mishawaka's utility rates remain among the lowest in the state—even when compared with nearby communities such as South Bend and Elkhart**.

That affordability is intentional. Mishawaka Utilities has invested steadily in infrastructure while maintaining disciplined financial management so residents receive both **reliable service and stable rates**.

Our water system delivers safe drinking water and strong fire protection. Our wastewater system protects public health and keeps our rivers clean. Our electric utility provides dependable power for homes and businesses while supporting economic development across the community.

At the same time, residents benefit from well-maintained streets, exceptional parks, strong public safety services, and a city government committed to responsible stewardship of public resources.

In an era when communities across the country face uncertainty, Mishawaka continues to demonstrate that thoughtful planning, disciplined leadership, and responsible management make a real difference.

Whether advocating for our community at the Statehouse or delivering services here at home, our focus remains the same.

And that commitment will always guide us forward. **That is the Mishawaka Way.**

-Mayor Dave Wood

Military Hometown Hero Banners

Banners are displayed on city lampposts from Memorial Day through Veterans Day.

For more info or to purchase a banner, visit:
<https://mishawaka.in.gov/hometown-heroes/>



State of the City Address

Presented by:
Mayor David A. Wood

April 30th 6:00 PM

City Hall Council
Chambers

SAVE THE DATE MISHAWAKA RETROFEST

Get ready to **TURN BACK TIME** at Ironworks Plaza with our annual Mishawaka **RETROFEST!**



Bands include The Crawpuppies, The 1985 & Fool House playing your favorites from decades past.
Food trucks, kids' area & more!

DATE: JUNE 13TH

TIME: 2:00 – 10:00 PM

LOCATION: IRONWORKS PLAZA



2026 Activity Guide

Get your **FREE** copy of the Mishawaka Parks 2026 Activity Guide!

Available now at the Parks Dept Offices, City Hall, or by scanning the QR code below.

