

JANUARY

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# MISHAWAKA COMMUNICATOR



## A LETTER FROM MAYOR DAVE WOOD

### Mishawaka: Leading Indiana Municipalities into the Future



I believe that local government makes the most impact on our daily lives yet remains the least understood level of government. In Mishawaka, we aim to make our vital services—clean water, reliable electric, public safety, quality streets and parks, dependable trash pickup—so seamless that you take them for granted. When I visit classrooms, I find students know a lot about the federal government, less about state government, and almost nothing about local government. I've made it my mission to change that.

Indiana has more than 450 cities and towns where most of the state's progress and growth occurs. Local governments in these communities significantly impact Hoosiers' lives. One organization shares my mission to highlight the importance of local government:

Accelerate Indiana Municipalities (AIM), formerly the Indiana Association of Cities and Towns. For 125 years, AIM has supported Indiana municipalities through education, advocacy, and innovative solutions, representing more than 450 cities and towns. I've participated in AIM for 25 years, served on its board for 10 years, and am honored to serve as its President for 2025.

It is hard for me to comprehend, but I am one of the longest serving Mayor's in the state. I now believe that I have the obligation to teach others in the same way that I have learned through AIM over my decades of service to Mishawaka.

Undertaking this role is a tremendous honor and responsibility. It allows me to serve not only Mishawaka but also communities across Indiana, advocating for their needs while showcasing Mishawaka's leadership, innovation, and commitment to progress. As AIM President, I'll collaborate with leaders statewide to address challenges and seize opportunities that strengthen our cities and towns.

## UPCOMING EVENTS



**January 4**

Barbie Ice Skating  
Ironworks Ice Rink



**January 18**

Carnival On Ice  
Ironworks Ice Rink



**February 21**

Daddy/Daughter Dance  
Battell Center



**February 22**

Mother/Son Dance  
Battell Center



**March 8**

Luminary Walk  
Riverwalk

*(Continued on next page)*

## A Letter from Mayor Dave Wood (continued)

This opportunity elevates Mishawaka's visibility on a statewide platform. Our successes—economic development, public safety, quality of life—serve as examples for other municipalities striving to improve. By sharing our strategies and best practices, we inspire others while creating partnerships and opportunities for our own city.

This leadership role also amplifies Mishawaka's voice in shaping legislative priorities. From advocating for infrastructure funding to addressing unfunded mandates, we'll have a seat at the table to influence decisions directly impacting our residents and businesses.

Mishawaka's story is one of innovation, resilience, and vision. Our accomplishments—opening the Mishawaka Fieldhouse, constructing Fire Station #2, revitalizing our parks—highlight our ability to deliver transformative projects that enhance quality of life. These successes, rooted in careful planning and collaboration, will guide my leadership at AIM as we work to advance the goals of Indiana municipalities.

My tenure as Mayor has equipped me with firsthand experience navigating the complexities of local government. From managing budgets and leading economic initiatives to addressing public safety and sustainability, I understand the challenges and opportunities municipalities face. This experience positions me to support leaders statewide while ensuring Mishawaka's interests remain a priority.

*Being part of AIM has not only made me a more effective leader but also enriched my efforts to inspire the next generation through the Mayor's Youth Advisory Council (MYAC). AIM has equipped me with resources and insights that I've used to educate these young leaders about the importance of local government. I've watched many of them grow inspired to make their own impact, with MYAC alumni now pursuing careers in public service and volunteering on community boards. Seeing their excitement for local government reaffirms the vital role AIM plays in connecting leaders and empowering communities.*

Serving as AIM President benefits Mishawaka directly. The relationships built through AIM open doors to partnerships that bring investments, programs, and ideas to our city. Learning from other communities and collaborating on regional initiatives strengthens our ability to serve residents effectively.

AIM's advocacy efforts give Mishawaka a powerful platform to advance legislative priorities, securing funding for projects and promoting policies supporting economic growth. Serving in this leadership role also reinforces Mishawaka's reputation as a forward-thinking city committed to continuous improvement, attracting businesses, families, and visitors.

This honor reflects the incredible work of our city team, businesses, community organizations, and residents. I remain committed to ensuring Mishawaka continues to grow, thrive, and serve as a model for others while representing our city and collaborating with leaders across Indiana to build vibrant communities.

Leadership is about service, commitment, and mission. Serving you as Mayor remains my highest honor and will not change as I take on this new role. The travel is minimal, with AIM covering expenses, and I would not accept this responsibility if I didn't see tangible benefits for Mishawaka. Together, we are building a brighter future for Mishawaka—and for all of Indiana.

Here's to a prosperous future for our city and Indiana municipalities!

Yours in Mishawaka,  
**Mayor Dave Wood**

