



# Mishawaka Communicator



*Working together to build the "Best Hometown in America" by delivering exceptional services, promoting safe and clean neighborhoods, elevating the quality of life and inspiring pride in our community.*

Dave Wood, Mayor

[www.mishawaka.in.gov](http://www.mishawaka.in.gov)

January 2021

## A Letter from Mayor Dave Wood



Downtowns have evolved and changed over the decades and the successful ones adapt to changing times and uphold unchanging values. Mishawaka's historic downtown took shape over a century ago when populations lived close to urban centers because they relied on the urban core for work, trade of necessities, church and social activities. Streets were designed to accommodate pedestrians, horse and buggy, electric street cars (trolleys) and later, the automobile. Then, following World War II, soldiers returned home from the war, worked at large factories in and around downtowns and had lots of kids. Many families were able to afford automobiles and the urban flight began. Demographics began to shift as families began to build homes outside of the urban core in suburbs and retail shops left downtown for shopping malls. City planning, land use and traffic management had to keep up with the changing trends. Motor vehicle movement was prioritized. Many multi-lane thoroughfares were developed and one-way streets with synchronized traffic signals became popular as a means of most effectively moving vehicular traffic into and out of downtowns. Though Mishawaka largely avoided the latter, it was clear that the motor vehicle was prioritized over all else here and elsewhere.

Pedestrian considerations in the downtown became limited. I fondly recall my Grandma, who lived near the downtown, walking me over the old railroad trestle bridge at Central Park to get to McClellan's Dime Store. It was a frightening prospect as one could look down between the old railroad ties of the bridge structure and see the swift flowing river water below. My grandma coaxed me across with the promise of a Victory Split from Bonnie Doon (a favorite of mine to this day). Now, the pendulum is swinging back and we are seeing a significant return of pedestrian and bicycle traffic in the downtown as population growth is reoccurring in the urban core. There are plenty of pedestrian and bike friendly amenities downtown now. Where I once crossed the river on that old, rickety railroad bridge, I can now cross on a dedicated (and safe) pedestrian bridge. I am often struck by the increasing presence of pedestrians in the downtown anytime I am there. I love seeing grandparents sitting on a bench after getting treats for their grandkids at the donut shop, families out on picnic at the Ball Band Biergarten, families riding their bikes through Battell Park, couples dining outdoor at one of the many downtown restaurants or just leisurely sitting on the swing watching life go by at Rosemary's Garden. In fact, a recent check of our newly installed Riverwalk pedestrian counters indicates that nearly a quarter million individuals have passed through the Mishawaka Riverwalk since the counters were installed in July! It is now clear that getting cars from point A to point B as quickly and safely as possible in the downtown is not the only consideration for roads and traffic management any longer.

*(cont'd on next page)*

## Screening Is Key to Early Detection of Lung Cancer

*Health Information from Saint Joseph Health System*

Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer-related death among men and women in the U.S. In Indiana alone, there were an estimated 5,700 new cases of lung cancer in 2020, with an estimated 3,570 deaths.

Getting screened to know your risk is important because early detection and prevention are keys to reducing mortality from lung cancer. For high-risk patients, early lung cancer screening has shown to reduce the risk of dying from lung cancer by at least 20 percent. Screening uses a low-dose CT scan to check for early signs of cancer.

Smoking is a significant cause of 85-90 percent of lung cancer. People at a higher risk for lung cancer include those who have a 30-pack-year history of smoking and are ages 55-80. In addition to current smokers, lung cancer is detected in a high percentage of former smokers. To reduce your risk of lung cancer, if you smoke, quit now. For more information and help on quitting smoking, ask your healthcare provider or call (800) Quit-Now.

To learn more, download a screening form at <https://www.sjmed.com/assets/lung-screening.pdf> and talk to your doctor about reducing your risk through lung screening.



### GEORGE WILSON HILL TUBING INFO (574) 258-1707

In order to keep patrons and staff safe, Wilson Hill has modified procedures for the 2020-21 tubing season:

- The warming room will be closed to the public.
- Tubes will be placed outside or picked up at the south exit door.
- Tubes will be returned to the north exit door.
- Tubes will be disinfected prior to reuse.
- Inside restrooms are closed to the public; portable restrooms are onsite.

Patrons are asked to follow posted signage information regarding COVID-19, masks and social distancing.

*Information subject to change. Please call prior to arrival to confirm the Tubing Hill is open.*

#### ONLINE ACCESS

-  <http://mishawaka.in.gov>
-  <http://facebook.com/cityofmishawaka>
-  <http://mishawaka.in.gov/communicator>
-  <http://mishawaka.in.gov/parksandrecreation>
-  <https://twitter.com/MishawakaMayor>
-  <https://instagram.com/MishawakaMayor/>

## A Letter from Mayor Dave Wood *(continued)*

The effective management of traffic, including pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular, is vital to public safety, but it also has many other important implications including the encouragement of business development. The City of Mishawaka has a longstanding history of encouraging new business development and is especially critical in the central business district. A component of good development is, of course, managing traffic whether that traffic is pedestrian, bicycle, or vehicular and is key to long-term vitality for growth of our downtown area.

Many communities have differing approaches to traffic management. Comparing other Indiana communities' revitalizations of their downtowns, they all have different approaches, some successful and some not so much. One common thread in the successes is encouraging pedestrian activity. When more people are present in the downtown area, demand for services and activities also increase. With the new residential and mixed-use development underway along Front Street, we will have a new large pool of residents at the doorstep of our downtown area. Consequently, the City has been investigating a number of actions that could be used to encourage pedestrian activity in our downtown area. We have specifically identified the Main Street corridor south of Church Street as one in which we wish to take steps to encourage this activity. In order to be successful, we believe that the priority for travel must be given to the pedestrian and not the automobile. Additionally, the area must be perceived to be safe and comfortable for pedestrians, there must be usefulness or purpose in the activity and it must be an enjoyable experience. At the north end of the Main Street corridor, we have various features that make the walking experience enjoyable. We want to add to those elements. We already have reasons or purposes to walk in the corridor, especially with the activities along the riverfront. We want to work with the merchants in this corridor to increase the purposes for walking in the downtown area.

There are a number of actions we can take to make the pedestrian feel safer and more comfortable being in the corridor. One of the actions to be undertaken will be looking at ways to slow traffic down thru the corridor. This has a number of advantages: one very important one is pedestrian safety. At 20 mph pedestrians are 90% likely to survive an accident with a motor vehicle. At 30 mph, that drops to 60 %. Consequently, in corridors such as Main Street, we will be actively looking into ways to slow the travel speeds. We will be looking at a number of other measures aimed at improving our intersections to make them more pedestrian friendly. Secondly, slowing traffic down will encourage motorists to see what is in the downtown area rather than trying to hurry through the area. Thirdly, slower travel speeds will make drivers backing out of their parking spots feel a little less stressed.

Another action relates to traffic signal control. Traffic signals have been in place at a number of intersections in our City for many, many years. Over time the travel conditions have changed and some may not be warranted. If a traffic signal is found to be unwarranted, the City investigates removing the signal and replacing it with a 4-way stop control. This will have the advantage of slowing travel speeds and providing pedestrians increased crossing safety. The City has targeted a few locations for an initial evaluation where this may be the case. Specifically, two locations are First Street and Main Street and Third Street and Main Street. Traffic counts taken before the Covid-19 pandemic indicate that both signals are unwarranted. In February, 2021, the City plans to put the signals into a four-way red flash mode for a period of time to evaluate the effects, especially looking at accident history before and after this action. The City welcomes public comment about the effects of this action and anticipate a final decision on the permanent change in operation by summer 2021.

An additional intersection at Eighth Street and Main Street was recently initiated for evaluation of this same change and will most likely move into the all-way flash mode in May 2021. The City has also completed a three-year traffic study of the Main-Church corridor including the intersections of Front and Main, Church and Main, Church and First, Church and Lincolnway, Church and Third, and Church and Fourth. We will roll out proposed changes for public comment and input from area businesses later in 2021 with construction planned for 2022.

These are indeed exciting times and we are seeing more interest as Mishawaka continues to grow. There will likely be several changes, not only with new and renovated structures, new businesses and new quality of life amenities but also new traffic patterns. Before any of this comes to pass, we look forward to your input. Please call, write, message me, our Engineering Department or our City Planning Department with your thoughts or come to any number of the public meetings where these matters are discussed. I always value your input.

Yours in Mishawaka,



### **MERRIFIELD ICE RINK (574) 258-1665**

**Open Skate:                Fridays, 5pm-9pm  
Sat-Sun:                    12pm-4pm; 5pm-9pm**

#### **Admission Fees now include skate rental!**

In order to keep patrons and staff safe, Merrifield Ice Rink is making some adjustments for the 2020-21 season:

- Capacity will be limited to 100 people to allow for social distancing.
- Masks required at all times including while skating. Please maintain 6 feet of social distancing at all times, on and off the ice.
- New traffic flow pattern in & out of the building to help patrons feel safe as they move through the complex.
- Warming room will be limited to skate returns.
- A designated outdoor shoe-changing area, with seating spaced to accommodate social distancing between families.
- A designated spectating area with space for social distancing.
- Disposable bags for shoes and personal belongings along with a free "item check" service will replace the traditional lockers. High touch surfaces and skates will routinely be disinfected between uses.
- Reservations or buying tickets in advance is not required at this time. Admissions staff will be keeping count of patrons as they enter and exit.

We hope that our endeavors to keep people safe and the waiver of locker and skate rental fees will help our patrons enjoy another wonderful season at the Merrifield Ice Rink!

*All information subject to change.*