

**City of Mishawaka
2012 State of the City Address**

“Moving Mishawaka Forward”
Mayor Dave Wood

Introduction

It has now been a year and a half since I took office, and 2011 has been quite a year. I stand here far more seasoned and knowledgeable, and I believe better prepared to serve our City. At last year’s State of the City, I was still very much on a learning curve. Now, I feel like I could teach *“Being Mayor 101”*. This position continues to be the highest honor of my life.

I continue to believe that City government is the most important layer of government because it is the closest to the people. That is what I love best about being Mayor. I also continue to believe as a whole our elected officials, department heads, and employees have the best interest of the City at heart. This is not just a job for most of us, and I am reminded every day of the culture of public service and family atmosphere of our City.

As for the State of our City, I am pleased to report that Mishawaka continues build a community that future generations can be proud of, and that is an attractive environment to live, work, raise a family and retire in... our promise is great. I am also pleased to report that the current state of our City continues to be fiscally stable, lean, and efficient. I am also proud that we continue to:

- Maintain a welcoming business climate.
- Strive to provide world-class public services.
- Plan for the future, while not borrowing from the future to pay for the present.

The theme I want to highlight for this year’s address is “Moving Mishawaka Forward”. You may recognize this as my campaign slogan from last year, but it could have been anyone’s slogan inserted here. As public servants, employees, or interested citizens, we all have similar thoughts, ideas, and notions to improve our City. Some may be narrowly focused such as on a park or road, some may just be broadly defined as finances or labor. In all cases they are part of the collective drive that provides the direction of our City. As Mayor, it is my job to help define this, lead our collective efforts, and navigate through our difficulties and disagreements. Particularly following an election year it can be hard for the public to see, but we truly are all on the same team and work together well. To use a football analogy, I have been elected the head coach with a new four year contract, but there are many parts to a team and we are only as good as the talents and effort that we collectively put forth. This is our collective call moving forward.

This year I am using this State of the City not only to reflect on what was accomplished in 2011, but to start laying out a game plan for the coming years. As any coach knows,

game plans are also fluid and react to the circumstances presented. Similarly, some of the issues/projects identified herein will be refined and evolve over time and will be shaped by everyone's participation in the process.

To help provide highlights on what transpired in 2011 and what is to come in 2012, I have divided this address into three areas:

- Improving our quality of life
- Job Opportunities/Economic Development
- Providing Public Services

Improving Our Quality of Life in 2011

There is a direct relationship between the work that government performs and the resulting quality of life of the people that live and work in our City. Whether it's a road, park, or an event, much of what the City does has an impact on the environment in which we live. Here are some of the highlights from 2011:

Church – Main Connector Improvements

These improvements completed at the end of 2011 are indicative of what Mishawaka tries to do on every project: enhance value. In this case, we had a need to replace underground utilities and widen Church-Main to a five-lane section, to provide a turning lane. We took this opportunity to enhance the appearance, improve pedestrian access and safety, and the result is that we enhanced the value and provided more of a sense of place for the downtown.



Picture of Church Main-Connector Improvements, January 2012

Improvement of the Church – Main Connector was completed by Rieth-Riley Construction at a cost of 3.3 million dollars. The project consisted of new concrete pavement sixty feet in width, providing two travel lanes in each direction and a continuous center left turn lane between the bridge over the St Joseph River and Lincolnway East. In addition, installation of storm sewer, upgrades to watermain and sanitary sewer, sidewalks, concrete curbs, upgrades to the three traffic signals at Church & Main, Church & First and Main & First, and installation of new street lights along both sides of project.

Major elements in this project were the reconfiguration of the intersection of Main and Church to include of landscaped traffic islands along Church Street to identify the gateway into the downtown. The project also includes; installation of field stone monument signs denoting “Historic Downtown” and “Ironworks”, reinstatement of the “Immigrants Sculpture”, small seating area on Main at Church Streets, expansion of the

police station parking lot to provide access at the signal on Main and Church Street and development of a Police Department Memorial Honor Garden.

Hillis Hans Park and Neighborhood Improvements

In June of 2011 the City cut the ribbon on close to a half million dollar investment in Hillis Hans Park. Park improvements included a facelift for the entire park: a new pavilion, reconstructed basketball courts, accessible sidewalks, new play equipment, new furnishings, lighting upgrades, and a rehabilitated restroom.

This effort was started by a small group of committed neighbors, who weren't complaining, but were merely taking action to build a pavilion in their park. The City's investment helped the adjacent property apply for and receive Federal Tax Credits to improve the Parkview Terrace Apartments and assist Habitat for Humanity to build four new single family homes along Dodge Avenue. By the end of 2012 close to four million dollars will have been spent to improve and revitalize this neighborhood.

Parks and neighborhoods have always been a high priority of mine. The prioritization of funds is always a challenge, but the Hillis Hans Neighborhood is a prime example of how leveraging City funds as part of a larger plan will have a profound neighborhood impact for decades to come. The City is now looking to use this model to apply to other parks in the City.



Picture of Hillis Hans Park Improvements, Summer 2011

Park Events

The Merrifield pool and rink finished out the year with record attendance and continued diversification in services. Our landscape crew worked with the community in new ways, and our festivals and concerts kept a strong attendance through the spring and summer. Our recreation programs continue to blossom, providing the youth of our community the opportunity to get healthy, stay healthy and to provide them with the necessary tools to enhance their life skills. All generations deserve the opportunity to enhance their lifestyle. Youth sports, adult recreation and senior shape-up are the building blocks of a true "Hometown" community.

This past year, Summerfest returned to Merrifield and Crawford Parks as a 3 day event from June 23rd to 25th. Thursday night started with the Kids Youth Triathlon followed by the Movie/Musical Xanadu at 7:30 p.m. At noon on Friday, June 24th all food vendors opened for business. Fireworks were displayed at dark at approximately 10pm. Festivities picked up on Saturday morning with a pancake breakfast, a 5k run/walk, a food eating competition, and the traditional concert Saturday evening. Everything our Park Department does provides a valuable contribution to our quality of life, and we are anxiously looking forward to what 2012 programming will bring.

Code Enforcement Top 100

Often overlooked, the Code Enforcement Department works everyday to keep Mishawaka clean and address common nuisances, making Mishawaka a better place to live, work, retire, and invest in. The Code Enforcement Department's primary focus continues to be on Mishawaka's neighborhoods. As one travels through out Mishawaka, you will not see many houses or buildings that are overtly in need of painting or repair. Code made some significant accomplishments in 2011 including the continuation of the yearly Top 100 Program where they were able to bring 87 of the worse 100 structures into compliance. At the same time, our Code Enforcement Department continued to emphasize substandard structures in general as they patrol their assigned areas and address public nuisance type cases.

Quiet Zones – Train Whistle Regulation

Another often overlooked, but an essential element to our quality of life, the City continued to implement the improvements necessary to maintain the City's quiet zones in 2011. The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) "Use of Locomotive Horns at Highway-Rail Grade Crossings" Final Rule became effective on June 24, 2005 and pre-empted existing state and local laws governing the sounding of locomotive horns. In accordance with Final Rule, Section 222.43, the City of Mishawaka submitted the Notice of Intent (NOI) in 2008 to continue its pre-rule quiet zone and filed a detailed plan for quiet zone improvements. These proposed safety measures were presented to the public at a Public Hearing in 2009 and at a Public Hearing on a Resolution of the Common Council for the permanent closure of Wells Street on October 6, 2009. The City agreed to the installation of mountable median channelization devices at the S. Main, Russell, and Logan Street crossings with the Norfolk and Southern Railroad and at the Jefferson Boulevard crossing with the Canadian National Railroad. That work was completed in 2011.

Long Term Control Plan

The City's Long Term Control Plan (LTCP) was designed to improve wastewater treatment and the sewer collection system to reduce the overflows from 50 per year in 2008 to less than 1 per year upon the plan's complete implementation. Improvements were previously completed at the Wastewater Treatment Plant which turned our attention

to the collection system improvements to redirect the remaining 50 million gallons of combined sewer overflow (CSO) to the St Joseph River.

In 2010 we concentrated on the completing Milburn Sections A, B, C, D, E and F of the collection system by installing separate storm sewers and underdrains to address high groundwater issues. In 2011, a continuation of work within the Milburn area included cured-in-place pipe (CIPP) lining rehabilitation of all the original combined sewers that were repurposed as strictly sanitary sewers. The remaining phases will address the approximately 1300 laterals and the rehabilitation of Milburn Section G. Section G is scheduled after all the sewer main CIPP lining has been completed since it includes upgrading the River Avenue lift station and having an accurate residual sanitary flow is critical to the upgrade design.

Design consultants completed Topographic Survey for the redirection of the Wilson Boulevard four CSOs to river crossing 3. Flow monitoring and final design will be completed in 2012 and construction anticipated for 2013.

The preliminary engineering was completed in 2011 for the remaining elements of the LTCP. However, it was determined that the several elements initially identified in the study required modification due to high groundwater, existing infrastructure conflicts, grade limitations, and overall maintainability issues.

Completion of the Mishawaka Avenue Bridge

In 2011, St. Joseph County completed the Mishawaka Avenue Bridge restoration. This project is a good example of intergovernmental cooperation, and illustrates when projects are done right how they contribute to our quality of life. Specifically, this project included the “Merrifield/Crawford Park Connector” section of the Riverwalk. This project was constructed as part of the restoration and widening of the Mishawaka Avenue Bridge and includes a connective tunnel underneath Mishawaka Avenue between Merrifield Park and Crawford Parks. The vast majority of the construction costs were paid for through Federal Grants and not local money. This was only possible due to the City’s partnership on this project with the Michiana Area Council of Governments (MACOG). The resulting improvements have received many compliments and are a testament to the detailed restoration efforts, and attention to detail taken by St. Joseph County and the Consulting Engineers, DLZ of South Bend



Picture of the completed tunnel and bridge taken in the summer of 2011

Improving Our Quality of Life in 2012

Every year brings a new set of opportunities and challenges. The following represents some of the highlights that we expect to see in 2012 which will no doubt positively impact the quality of life of our City.

Signing the consent decree

There is likely no greater quality of life/legacy issue than improving our environment, and more specifically, our greatest natural resource, the St. Joseph River. In 2012 the City will likely enter into its Combined Sewer Overflow Long Term Control Plan consent decree. The signing will bring to fruition seven years of negotiations with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Department of Justice and the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM). The Long Term Control Plan will be enforced by a federal consent decree because Mishawaka discharges into an interstate river. The decree will require that the control plan be implemented according to schedule and that it meet the negotiated level of control.

Mishawaka's proactive approach to combined sewer overflow (CSO) reduction has paid big dividends. A combination of treatment plant expansions, sewer separation projects and sewer system improvements have reduced CSOs by over 86% since 1990. The upgraded treatment plant has capacity for treating increased flows during wet weather and capacity for continued development and growth to keep Mishawaka moving forward.

Reducing the remaining CSOs will be expensive, \$140 to \$160 million, and will take up to 20 years to complete. However, Mishawaka has cost effectively gotten ahead of the curve on CSO reduction. Our CSO control plan will result in zero overflows in years with average rainfall and our early action projects have put us ahead of many Indiana communities in affordably achieving a very high level of control. The river has become a focal point in our downtown and we are committed to protecting and enhancing this vital resource.

Sidewalks/ADA Transition Plan

One of our areas of planning and study in 2011, was sidewalks, specifically with regard to the accessibility. The City of Mishawaka completed the self-evaluation of all City facilities outside of the public right-of-way (ROW), programs, and procedures and prepared a Transition Plan that outlines the necessary steps to be fully compliant with the requirements of Title II of the ADA. The City will strive to include annual budgetary allotments to make required improvements that will eventually make the various facilities fully accessible, with emphasis given to the improvements that most impact the ability of persons with disabilities to access facilities or programs. In addition to City facilities, the self-evaluation reviewed existing City policies and procedures within each department. Following this review, recommendations were made to improve accessibility of programs for each department.

It is the goal of the City to make facilities for all services, programs and activities fully accessible within 30 years, though this will be largely dependent on a number of economic factors and future changes to the ADA Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) or other unforeseen requirements that would necessitate additional improvements to City facilities. The results of the self-evaluation identified a number of barriers at City facilities. The estimated cost to correct these deficiencies is in excess of 3.5 million dollars plus public ROW. The degree to which these barriers limited accessibility and their priority for corrective action was subjectively categorized as “high”, “medium”, or “low”. The actual implementation schedule, budgeting, and prioritization is up to the administration and is likely to be impacted by complaints, new regulations and requirements, and availability of funding. A report to the City Common Council will be presented for approval and adoption in the spring of 2012.

The next steps involve self evaluation of approximately 1300 intersections and where feasible incorporating the 60 public survey responses regarding sidewalks. A separate self-evaluation and transition plan will be developed in 2012 for City facilities within the public ROW.

First Time Homebuyer Program/Habitat for Humanity Partnership

In 2012 the City will continue our First Time Homebuyer program, and potentially look to expand our partnership with Habitat for Humanity of St. Joseph County. Both of these programs place new houses in existing established neighborhoods. Many times, these homes are replacing structures that had been blighted or were otherwise a negative impact. This new construction turns what was once a negative into a positive, all while providing quality home ownership opportunities to low and moderate income families. Specifically, in 2012 the City is hopeful to partner with Habitat to develop the residual properties that remain from the construction of the Main Street underpass.

Center for Hospice/Central Park

In the summer of 2011, the Redevelopment Commission entered into a Memorandum of Understanding to allow for the development of an institutional campus for the Center for Hospice and Palliative Care. The campus will be located to the south of Madison Street and will extend from Pine Street to Central Park. The plan includes the phased construction of a new hospice house, community bereavement center, palliative care center, and administrative/support services. Right now the administrative functions for Center for Hospice are dispersed in multiple locations in the region. Approximately 70 employees are intended to be housed at this facility to start, with an opportunity for growth over time. Already this year, Center for Hospice has begun demolition of a number of homes and the former Moose Lodge. They are currently finalizing their master plan and still intend to break ground on the first phase of the campus in 2012.

Concurrent with the Center for Hospice Plans the City is looking to improve Central Park by providing vehicular access from Cedar Street, upgrading playground equipment, improving the sea wall railing, and fixing erosion problems by the dam. The City has

contracted with Lehman and Lehman to prepare a master plan for improvements. Depending on cost, the City intends to make improvements concurrent with the Center for Hospice project.



Riverwalk Expansions

The Mishawaka Riverwalk continues to be the cornerstone for many of the City's redevelopment efforts. It connects neighborhoods and parks by taking advantage of the City's greatest natural resource: the St. Joseph River. The Mishawaka Riverwalk also adds value to existing homes and neighborhoods, and will undoubtedly be a source of pride for Mishawaka's citizens for generations to come.

Already in 2012 the City has applied through MACOG for \$1,098,144 in Federal Transportation Enhancement (TE) funds to extend the riverwalk through Merrifield Park. The project includes the relocation of the existing access drive, the construction of the riverwalk, creating a more formal boat launch, and restroom upgrades. Once completed, this section will extend the walk from the recently completed "Merrifield/Crawford Park Connector" to the intersection of Prospect and Indiana Avenue. The City acquired and demolished property at 1002 Prospect Avenue in 2011 specifically to allow for the widening of this intersection and to provide a suitable connection to the adjacent neighborhoods. It will likely take few years to receive funding, bid, and construct this phase of the project.

In addition to this section through Merrifield, the City continues to work on the design and property acquisition required to extend the walk to Cedar Street. As part of the agreement with Center for Hospice, the riverwalk will be extended through the former Moose property concurrent with other improvements. The City also continues to work with DLZ on the design and acquisition of property from Race Street to Cedar Street on the south side of the river.



Proposed Merrifield Park Riverwalk Extension

Job Opportunities/Economic Development 2011

Despite the worst economic downturn since the great depression, which was estimated to hit bottom in the middle of 2009, the City of Mishawaka (and northern Indiana in general) continued to grow in 2011, but unfortunately at a much slower pace than anyone would like. The City of Mishawaka continues to reap the benefits of our long-term strategic decision-making, such as the relocation of the Saint Joseph Regional Medical Center and our emphasis on diversifying the City's economy by promoting higher paying medical, technology, and office jobs. That being said, Mishawaka is not an island. We are impacted by both the national and regional economy. As a region we need to emphasize creating new jobs and further diversifying our economy. To accomplish this, more than ever, the City of Mishawaka needs to engage and take on more of a leadership role for our region.



Building the Medical Mecca - Douglas Road Medical Park (Trinity Place)

With the construction of the St. Joseph Regional Medical Center, the City has actively sought out opportunities to attract high paying medical related jobs and businesses. In 2011 the City completed Trinity Place which is the second of two phases to connect Holy Cross Parkway to Fir Road. The project was completed at the end of 2011 and will be opened to traffic in 2012. The project was unique

since it required special stormwater measures due to Juday Creek. Specifically, work included a three-sided precast concrete bridge structure with a span of 32 feet to cross Juday Creek. In addition, the project included the City standards of concrete curb, pavement, drive approaches and sidewalks, as well as storm sewer, sanitary sewer, and water main. The completion of Trinity Place provides multiple "shovel ready" sites for development in the vicinity of the St Joseph Regional Medical Center.

In addition to Trinity Place, the City also completed the Holy Cross Lift Station and Forcemain Projects. A regional sanitary sewer lift station was constructed to service the new hospital and also the anticipated growth of the City's North-East area. With the completion of the Lift Station in 2011 and all phases of the 2 mile long 24" HPDE forcemain completed in early 2011, this new facility was brought on-line and enabled two existing lift stations (Indian Lakes Apartments and Douglas Road at WSBT) to be eliminated. This will reduce operating and maintenance costs and provides ample capacity for new growth north east of the City. A subsequent project will reroute the discharge from the University Drive Lift Station into this new facility utilizing the 24" gravity sewer in place in Douglas Road. When the University Drive Lift Station Re-route Project is complete the combined flow removed from the North Main Street Trunk Sewer will also provide additional capacity for growth in the area north of SR 23.

New Construction in 2011

In 2011, the total number of new housing starts was exactly the same as 2010. The saturated market and the housing speculation has been the biggest influence on residential construction. Commercial construction has also been in a downward spiral since 2007.

- A total of 22 new single family permits were issued in 2011. This is the same as last year but down from 32 from the previous year, and down from 47 in 2008.
- There were 4 new commercial buildings started in 2011, compared to 9 last year and 8 in 2009.

The city issued permits worth almost \$45 million in 2011 compared to \$43 million in 2010. This marks the third consecutive year of the totals being among the lowest in the past 10 years. Between 2005 and 2008, even excluding the St. Joseph Regional Medical Center project, the City had averaged close to \$100 million in construction every year. \$45 million is the second lowest valued construction year that has occurred in the City in the past ten years, second only to 2010. The good news, if any, is that the market appears to be stabilizing.

Points of interest:

- For the first time in three years, multiple-family building permits were pulled for new structures. AHEPA, 52 senior apartments are being constructed along south Merrifield Avenue, just north of the existing Kroger shopping center. In addition, the permit was pulled for the Mishawaka River Center Apartments. This 32-unit senior apartment conversion of the Old Main Junior High/former Mishawaka Furniture building is being funded in part through tax credits and in part through Northwest TIF funding. The project will be worked on throughout 2012 with expected occupancy at the end of the year.
- One of those positive events from 2011 was the reinvestment occurring in Historic Downtown Mishawaka. Significant vacant or underutilized space was renovated and occupied in 2011. The first floor of the Yorktown Center Building located at the intersection of Lincolnway and Main Street was remodeled for Roc's Sports Café. The building adjacent to Yorktown to the East was converted into Smith's Pub. The Former Women and Children's Center located at the intersection of Mill Street and Lincolnway is now the home of Frost Engineering, with a new tenant planned for the ground level floor. Princess City Antique shop and Arkos Architectural firm are among some of the other small businesses to invest in Historic Downtown Mishawaka in 2011.



The remodeled Yorktown Building, now home to Roc's

Job Opportunities/Economic Development 2012

Although the City itself doesn't directly create economic development/jobs like private industry, we contribute to the overall business climate and most importantly provide infrastructure necessary for growth and development. In 2012 we will continue to make strides to improve our infrastructure and the local climate for new development in the City, specifically with the intent of attracting higher paying jobs and new investment.

SR331 Capital Avenue/Toll Road/Fir Connector

This project is significant. Not only because it will open up approximately 240 acres of prime real estate, but overall it will improve access to the Indiana Toll-Road for many of the existing hotels, businesses, and restaurants currently located in the City.

The extension of sanitary sewer and water north of Cleveland Road in the Fir Road corridor to serve St. Pius Church and School coupled with the resolution of a law suit assuring a full access point on the west side of SR331 at the Mile Post 83 the Entrance to the Indiana Toll Road established approximately 125 acres of vacant property north of Cleveland and east of Fir Roads as potential commercial development.

Late in 2011 the City partnered with developers representing property owners to identify a conceptual alignment for a new connector road that will connect Fir Road with Capital Avenue at the Toll Road entrance for a total length of approximately 3,600 feet. Along with the topographic survey, drainage evaluation and a utility master plan will be developed for the entire site. Once established, an information meeting will be held with affected property owners to review alternate alignments for the road and to determine the location for access points along the connector road. The tentative schedule for this project is to develop preliminary grading and alignment plans (25%) by August of this year.

Downtown Development Strategy

Since 2007, the City has entered into memorandums of understanding with four different entities to develop area in and around downtown as part of our redevelopment strategy. These four entities include Ironworks of Mishawaka (Prime Development), Riverwalk Townhomes, Retail Property Development, and Center for Hospice. In 2007, no one could have predicted the coming magnitude and extent of the banking and housing crisis and the great recession. However, with the market hitting bottom, and the Center for Hospices planned construction, 2012 is an appropriate time to evaluate our current agreements and prepare a marketing strategy for the coming years. With the guidance of the Redevelopment Commission, in 2012 the City will set up meetings with our existing developers, real estate firms, and others to plot a course taking for the next steps in implementing our vision for the downtown.

Mishawaka River Center Apartments

This project could have been placed in quality of life, or delivery of services, but I chose to list it under economic development because of the significant scope of the project job creation, and the resulting impact it is intended to have. When the City first acquired this building it was with the intent of turning a dilapidated, blighted historically relevant building into a landmark in the downtown that helps build much needed population in the downtown. In 2012, we will see the transformation of this building and the completion of this long anticipated project.

As for its recent history, in 2010 the Redevelopment Commission, on behalf of the City, submitted an application to the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority to receive Rental Housing Tax Credits for the conversion of the former Mishawaka Furniture store/Old Main Junior High into senior apartments. The project is called the Mishawaka River Center Apartments. This project has been reported on for a number of years, and in 2011 significant strides were made. In late Spring, the tax credits were sold, in the summer plans were finalized, in the fall the project was bid, and in December the project was awarded to Ziolkowski Construction from South Bend for 7.3 Million dollars. When the project was bid in the fall of 2011, bids came in significantly higher than estimated. As a result, the Redevelopment Commission increased the amount of City Tax Increment Funds that would be available to complete the project. Originally, it was anticipated that 1.7 million dollars in Tax Increment Funds would be required. As part of their role as developer for the project, the amount of Tax Increment Funds committed to the project increased to 3.9 million dollars. Although we anticipate the actual costs to come in significantly lower, the 3.9 million included over a million dollars in contingency to address unforeseen conditions should they arise.



Work in Progress, February 2012



Architect's Rendering of Finished Project

Private Manufacturing Trends = Brighter Outlook in 2012

Manufacturing is a hallmark of our local economy. Although the City doesn't create manufacturing jobs, we do our best to maintain an environment that is conducive to operating and growing businesses. Based on the contact we have had with some local businesses, 2012 is looking-up for our local economy.

- Based on tax abatement compliance forms filed in 2011, Nyloncraft employed 63 more people than the 240 reported in 2010.
- Wellpet is in the middle of a 68,000 square foot addition. They have estimated that they will double production at their Logan Street facility, invest over 20 million dollars and creating 45 new jobs.
- JAMIL Packaging filed for and received a tax abatement in 2011 nearly 1 million dollar investment in new machinery and adding at least 6 jobs.
- Elixer on Lincolnway closed a number of years ago as part of the downturn in the RV industry. Opened again last year, they are considering adding an additional production line.
- Patrick Metals: employment in 2011 was at 220, only 136 employees were listed on the 2009 tax abatement compliance form. This employment is more than what they envisioned when they most recently expanded in 2007.
- AM General: Although the commercial Hummer is no more, AM General announced two new vehicles to be produced. One is the MV-1 which has been billed as the first vehicle designed from the ground-up with the American's with Disabilities Act in mind. The second is a joint venture to produce a hybrid cargo van.

Providing Public Services 2011

As was my theme at last years State of the City, I truly believe that one of the differences in Mishawaka is the world class services provided by our dedicated employees, department heads, elected and appointed officials. That being said, every year comes with its own unique set of challenges and opportunities. Here are some of the significant items to note from 2011.

City Wide Elections

In 2011 City wide elections were held including the office of Mayor, City Council, and the City Clerk. I personally would like to thank the electorate for affording me the privilege of serving in this capacity for another four years. This will be my first full term, after having been appointed to fill out the remainder of Mayor Jeff Rea's term.

Common Council - One member, Councilman at large Gregg Hixenbaugh decided not to seek another term. Also, at-large Councilman John Gleissner and third district Councilman Ross Deal lost in their effort to be re-elected. On behalf of the City, I want to thank both of them for their years of service and leadership. Mishawaka's elected officials continue to be a collection of dedicated individuals. Although we sometimes may have disagreed on how to achieve it, Gregg, John, and Ross first and foremost, had the City's best interest at heart.

I also want to welcome new Common Council Members, at large Matt Mammolenti, at large Dan Bilancio, and third district Councilman John Reisdorf to their new respective positions. The elected officials of the City who will serve a four year term starting in 2012 are as follows:

MAYOR: Mayor Dave Wood won election to his first full term, defeating State Representative Craig Fry.

CITY CLERK: Clerk Debbie Ladyga-Block defeated Tina Smith winning her sixth term as Mishawaka City Clerk. She now becomes the longest serving, current elected official in Mishawaka.

1st DISTRICT CITY COUNCIL: Councilman Dale "Woody" Emmons won re-election for a third term defeating Attorney, Ben Blatt.

2nd DISTRICT CITY COUNCIL: Councilman Mike Bellovich defeated Gary Roberts for his first full term.

3rd DISTRICT CITY COUNCIL: John Reisdorf defeated incumbent Councilman, Ross Deal to win his first term.

4th DISTRICT CITY COUNCIL: Councilwoman Marsha McClure won re-election for a fourth term, defeating Chris Ermeti. Marsha now is the longest serving current elected official on the Council.

5th DISTRICT CITY COUNCIL: Councilman Mike Compton was re-elected to serve his second full term by defeating Mike Ping.

6th DISTRICT COUNCIL: Councilman Ron Banicki won re-election to his second full term defeating Jim Pingel.

COUNCIL AT LARGE: Councilman John Roggeman was re-elected to his third term. John was then elected Council President by his peers for the 2012 year.

Dan Bilanchio and Matt Mammolenti were elected to their first full terms on the Council. Both have served the City before in other capacities, Dan retired as a paramedic and Chief of the EMS division and Matt served on the Redevelopment Commission.

Paul Saros and Josh Holt ran unsuccessfully for Council-at-large.

Mishawaka is unique among cities. One reason for that is the civility that Mishawaka's elected officials display towards each other and the professionalism that they bring to their job of serving the public. Mishawaka's elected officials usually place the City's and citizens' interests above all other concerns. The new Council, Clerk and Mayor certainly possesses these qualities and Mishawaka can look forward to being served by a government that is open, honest, friendly and hard-working.

Change in Department Heads

From an administration/running the City perspective, Department Heads are the ones responsible for applying resources, personnel, and getting the job done. We have been fortunate in Mishawaka to have a wealth of experience with long-standing, dedicated department heads. Thus, when they make a decision to move on, it is important to recognize their contribution and also find a suitable replacement. In 2011, the Human Resources Director Position that was vacated by Tara Antonucci being filled on an interim basis by retired Human Resources Director Bonnie Bonham. I am pleased to report that at the end of 2011 Bonnie agreed to remove the interim label and has assumed the position again full-time.

In 2011 we also had long time Park Superintendent Mike Faulkner leave the City and assume the assistant athletic director position for Mishawaka High School. Mike was replaced following a nationwide search with Terry Zeller who came to us most recently as serving as the Park Superintendent in Reno, Nevada.

Lory Timmer, the City Community Development Director, left the position in the fall of 2011 to take a financial analyst position with the City of South Bend. We are still actively looking for a replacement.

Although not a Department Head position, it is important for me to note and recognize the departure of Julia DeKeizer who left as the Mayor's Assistant to work for the Chamber of Commerce of St. Joseph County. Julie was replaced by Lou Ann Hazen.

As a City we thank Tara, Mike, Lory, and Julie for their dedication, hard work, and contributions to the City and wish them well in their new positions.

Crime Statistics

Mishawaka is seeing our overall crime rate decrease slightly. No amount of crime is acceptable, and particularly with the two murders that occurred in our City at the end of 2011, we know that mere statistics can't measure the true impact of crime and the impact it has on families, neighborhoods, and our City as a whole. That being said, we document the numbers of crime for the historical record, to evaluate needs, and identify how resources are applied. Because crimes are relatively few in number and fluctuate from year to year, for statistical purposes we try to compare rates to the 10 year average rather than year-to-year. Some of the 2011 statistics by major categories are as follows:

- Total dispatches dropped by approximately one tenth of one percent to 45,128
- Two murders occurred in the City in 2011. A total of eight murders have occurred in the City in the last ten years.
- The number of rapes (12) identified in the crime reporting is 27% below the ten year average.
- A total of 68 Robberies were identified in the crime report, up from the 10 year average of 64 (6% higher).
- Assaults dropped between 2010 and 2011, and were 24% below the 10 year average (734 total).
- The number of burglaries (517) dropped by approximately 1% between 2010 and 2011, but was still 17% above the 10 year average of 442 per year.
- Larceny has steadily declined in the City over the last 10 years. In 2011 we had the single lowest annual number of larcenies identified in the last ten years and were 25% below the 10 year average (2,234 total).
- Auto theft has steadily declined in the City over the last 10 years. In 2011 we had the single lowest number of auto thefts identified in the last ten years (144). The numbers of thefts were 22% below the 10 year average.
- The number of arsons (17) identified in the crime reporting is 24% below the ten year average.

Fire / Ambulance Runs

The total run volume for the Fire Department, including fire and E.M.S. increased this year to 6,011 from 5,727 in 2010. This increase was in part attributable to running a third ambulance for much of the year. This averages 501 runs per month or roughly 17 runs per day. Medical runs have a minimum one-hour turnaround time and are 80% of the total call volume. The total E.M.S. runs this year were 4,804. The Department also

responded to 17 commercial fires, 28 residential fires, 7 garage fires, and 11 apartment complex fires. Total fire losses were estimated at \$2,282,725 for the year.

This past year was a busy year for the EMS Division. With both increasing calls for service and acuity of illness, our EMS providers have answered the call to duty each and every time. The demands for accurate reporting, certifications and training have continued to increase as well. In addition, the dispatchers were required to learn a new software program for dispatching calls. Special codes entered by the dispatchers indicate the type of call-out. In the past, all EMS calls were responded to with lights and sirens. Now depending on the severity of the call that may not always be necessary. This increases safety for the firefighters and the general public.

During 2011 we were able to complete the implementation of a new EMS reporting system that directly coordinated with our new outside EMS billing company. Due to the efficiency of our members and their reporting, the billing company reduced the fee it charges the City of Mishawaka by $\frac{3}{4}$ %.

In January the Common Council changed the fee structure for ambulance runs to keep pace with other area providers. These changes and the addition of the third ambulance for $\frac{3}{4}$ of the year allowed us to increase ambulance runs by 472 calls over 2010, an increase of 10.8%. Revenues also increased from \$522, 521 in 2010 to \$1,112,829 for 2012.

Unfortunately the City of Mishawaka lost an arbitration ruling in December that has forced us to only have two ambulances in service most days. We are hopeful to continue to work with Mishawaka Firefighters Local #360 to look for ways to increase and make better use of staffing as part of the 2012 contract negotiations.

Central Services

As reported in last year's State of the City, the City received a record setting snow fall on January 8th and 9th of 2011 and it put our Central Services Department to the test. We ran three shifts, Monday through Friday, from January 2 through the end of March, but these two days happened to be a Saturday and a Sunday. This meant calling employees in for overtime and setting up a schedule to cover the weekend until the start of the normal 3rd shift on Sunday evening at 11:00 pm. Our dedicated employees answered the call by clearing approximately 23 inches of snow from our streets, City-owned sidewalks and parking lots. During this time period, other governmental units in our area were declaring snow emergencies giving the Police the power to ticket anyone on the roads. This meant many businesses in those areas decided to close and, therefore, lost revenue. Because of the hard work of our dedicated employees and help from many dedicated employees in other City Departments, we were able to keep our citizens on the road and businesses open. Our employees really do care about our citizens and that is good for Mishawaka's future. Fortunately, this winter has been unusually mild.

Automation/Technology Improvements

As a City, we continue to work to keep up with technology and deliver our services more efficiently and cost effectively. 2011 brought a number of advances in this regard.

Time and Attendance software from B4Time went live at many City and Utility sites. Old paper time card punches were replaced with biometric palm readers to punch in and out. The new software is web browser based so that no client is required on computers to access the software. This makes future upgrades of the software server centralized and client device agnostic. Efficiencies in collection of punches stands to be a great cost benefit to the City.

Remote Access for the Police Department was implemented to accommodate offsite reporting. Previously officers such as school resources officers would have to go to the Police Station to write up their reports. With the ability to have remote access to the police records system, they are able to log-in and remotely write reports. This has helped in reducing officer overtime. There are several other divisions in the police department that are also using this offsite reporting ability.

Mishawaka Utilities E-Billing replaces paper bills and statements with enhanced, interactive electronic documents that are delivered securely and directly to customer inboxes. This enables Mishawaka Utilities to reduce their billing costs, while maintaining customer service and efficiency. In addition to its ability to help utilities control billing expenses, E-Billing has proven to be extremely efficient in allowing for faster payments. By signing up for e-mail statements, you can enjoy the following benefits: Receive an email when your bills are ready to view; Download and print your billing information at your convenience; Avoid mail delays; Avoid statements lost in the mail; Avoid missing or delayed statements due to changes in address; Help the environment by saving paper and reducing waste.

We've added 470 e-bill customers this year, growing our total to 730 from when we started in November of 2010. We plan on increasing that number significantly in the next year as we continue to promote the advantages E-Bill statements.

Mishawaka Fire Station #4

In 2011, following eight years of planning, study, and property acquisition, construction began on replacing Fire Station #4. The 3.7 million dollar project was awarded to Casteel Construction of South Bend and is currently on schedule to be complete in late 2012. Although the existing Fire Station #4 is a beautiful and historic Tudor revival building that was constructed in 1929, the existing building houses just one truck that has to be custom ordered to fit inside the building. The existing facility also has no off-street parking, and no room for needed expansion.

The replacement fire station is a 13,750 square foot single-story building with three garage bays for fire trucks and/or EMS vehicles. An important component of the City's service model is to be able to house an ambulance at this location. The building will house a training room that can also be used for official neighborhood/public meetings. In 2012, discussions will continue with School City of Mishawaka and the Mishawaka Board of Parks and Recreation to finalize plans to extend Bennington Drive, provide a signalized intersection, and make adjustments to Hums Park.



Architects rendering of new Station #4



Construction as of February 2012

Providing Public Services 2012

Water & Electric Rate Cases

In 2012 rate case studies will be initiated for the Water and Electric Utilities. Water rates were last adjusted in 2002. Electric rates were last adjusted in 1993. In order to continue to serve our customers with the service and quality they have come to expect, these rate studies are required. Be assured these studies will be done with the goal of keeping our rates among the lowest in the State of Indiana. We have taken steps in the last five years to address our rising costs to provide these services to our customers. These steps have included making the tough decision to reduce personnel as needed without affecting service, and developing and using new technologies to control our administrative and billing costs.

The Water rate case will have two components. First we will analyze our costs versus revenue to determine our revenue requirements. Second we intend to evaluate our current rate structure. Our intent is to simplify the structure so that our customer's costs would be a combination of a base charge to cover the Utility's fixed costs, and a uniform rate for the actual volume of water used. This type of rate structure encourages conservation because saving water equates directly to lower water bills.

The Electric bill consists of a customer charge to cover administrative and fixed costs, the energy charge which was established during the last rate case in 1993, and the tracker. The Electric rate case will center on analyzing our costs to provide service and minimizing the tracker portion of the bill. The tracker represents fluctuating costs incurred by our wholesale electric supplier, AEP/I&M, which are passed on to us. These costs are volatile in nature such as fuel costs to operate their electric generating facilities. The incorporation of these costs into the energy portion of the bill will truly reflect the increase wholesale power costs we have incurred over the past 19 years. The tracker can never be totally eliminated since it is the mechanism the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission (IURC) has approved to capture these volatile costs in the future.

We strongly believe our Electric Utility is second to none in its ability to respond quickly to outages if they occur. Our residents frequently commend the efforts of our personnel to keep the lights on. While other areas suffer lengthy outages, we typically do not. If we do lose power, the lights are restored quickly. As to how we measure up to other Utilities in Indiana, the most recent data compiled by the IURC shows Mishawaka Utilities as the third lowest electric rate supplier of the 22 utilities overseen by the IURC. Those 22 utilities include 13 municipals, 4 co-operatives and 5 investor owned which include AEP/I&M, Duke Energy and NIPSCO. Our Water Utility takes great pride in supplying safe, dependable drinking water to our customers. When main breaks occur, we are quick to respond and restore service. The IURC shows us as the 15th lowest cost water supplier out of 108 utilities overseen by them.

Although these rate cases are likely to result in increased costs to our customers, rest assured they will be scrutinized closely to keep them as low as possible and maintain our

distinction as a low cost, world class supplier to our customers. It remains our intention to be one of the lowest electric and water rate communities in the State of Indiana.

2012 Collective Bargaining Negotiations

The 2012 collective bargaining season will entail every labor contract in the City with the exception of the IBEW contract. Specifically, we will be negotiating with the fire, police, central services, sewer, and dispatch labor groups.

The content of negotiations will largely be reflective, as we examine the successes (and shortcomings) of the major overhauls that were done in the previous round of negotiations. Though we do not expect the changes in the upcoming negotiations to be nearly as significant as they were two years ago, we are steadfast in our desire to create the most efficient and effective division of labor as possible. To that end, we do expect some changes to ensure we are providing not only great service to the City, but also a great environment for our employees.

As mentioned previously, we are hopeful to continue to work with Mishawaka Firefighters Local #360 to look for ways to increase and make better use of staffing to operate a third full-time ambulance as part of the 2012 contract negotiations.

Balanced Budget

Similar to balancing our family budgets, every year when we discuss the State of our City we include our challenges to balance our budget while continuing to provide world-class service, while still providing cost of living adjustments for our employees. 2012 is shaping up to be one of those challenging years.

In 2011 we received our normal biannual property tax distributions from the County. In 2011 we received 92.7% of our tax levy that left us short \$1.7 million dollars. The City tends to be cautious in its spending and its management of the city budget so in these hard times we benefit by conservative planning. We, as a city still deliver exceptional services as we try to control our costs.

Also in 2011, the City's health insurance cost increased \$791,541. In April of 2010 the City of Mishawaka became part of the IACT Trust. The payments from April 2010 are based on premium rate payments rather than payment of claims. Due to increases in premiums for 2011(7.9%) and 2012(14.2%) the City of Mishawaka will revisit health insurance options in 2012.

Central Services Building Needs

For the past few years we have been evaluating our storage and building needs for the Central Services Department. We have been residing at our current location of 500 North Cedar Street (behind the Ace Hardware Store) since 1963. Over the past 49 years, the City expanded the amount of property by purchasing the South Bend Modern Molding

property in 1998 on the east end of our current location. Central Services operates from this location and has the responsibility for the maintenance and up-keep of all City and Mishawaka Utility owned property. Mishawaka's Sewer Maintenance Department is also located at this complex.

We have been considering facility improvements to more efficiently house and maintain our vehicles and equipment. Working to meet our goals, in 2010 we hired Forum Architects to give us a cost estimate for a steel building. The dimensions of this building would be 105 feet wide and 210 feet long. As they researched the subsoil where this building could be built and the topography, we found that we would need to perform extensive excavation of the subsoil and build a substantial retaining wall and drainage system on the north side of the building. In a nutshell, the cost for this 23,100 sq foot building would be \$1,700,000. We also considered building a new salt barn at our 5th Street location. That estimate was \$350,000. Soon we were over \$2,000,000, and we had not met our building needs. Given the economic climate and the land/expansion limitations at this location, I asked the Department to fully examine other alternatives. We have some large upcoming "repair of building" expenses that would also add to the cost of remaining in our current location. With the cost of remaining at 500 North Cedar Street growing, we decided to look into relocating our operations. We hope to come to you with some answer within the next six months. Including investigating the redevelopment potential resale value of the existing facility, if any.

2012 Construction Projects

One of the most tangible elements we have in moving the City forward is some of our public works construction projects. 2012 will bring a number of previously started projects to completion, and here are some of the other significant projects we are looking to make progress on in 2012.

- **Bennington Drive**

With the improvements along Capital Avenue, Twelfth Street/Harrison Road and replacement of Fire Station No. 4, it was found feasible that Bennington Drive be extended from the south going north from the existing intersection of Twelfth Street and Bennington Drive to the proposed Fire Station to be located in the farm field between the Creekside Apartment complex and Hums Elementary School, for a total length of approximately 800 feet. The primary objective of this extension will be to access the fire station. The recreational facilities impacted with the extension will be replaced in-kind. This includes shifting the football field and basketball court slightly north, and a new shelter/restroom building. The existing parking will be replaced by providing a pedestrian access to the school parking lot and fire station training/visitor parking lot. In addition, the intersection of Harrison Road and Bennington Road will be signalized making for a safer environment for children accessing the park and students walking to nearby Hums School. The project will be bid in March with the construction starting in May of 2012.

- **Twelfth/Harrison Road Reconstruction**

The improvements along Capital Avenue and as part of the corridor study from Union Street to Blackberry Road, necessitated improvements along East Twelfth Street/Harrison Road (Phase I), which will consist of widening and addition of a center turn lane from approximately 200' east of Eller Ditch to the west approach of the intersection of Twelfth Street and Blackberry Road, for a total length of approximately 5,200 feet. The City was successful in securing Federal funding for this project through INDOT and will continue to seek Federal funding for the subsequent phases. The design of the project is approximately 70% complete with the R/W acquisition commencing at this time and anticipated to be completed by the end of 2012 with the project constructed the spring of 2013.

- **Church/Main between LW and Norfolk and Southern Railroad**

The Church Main Phase 3 project will continue the 5-Lane section recently completed as a part of the Church Main Project south from Lincoln Way to the Penn-Central Railroad Overpass. The pavement section will include four through lanes and one center left turn lane. The addition of the center left turn lane will allow vehicles traveling on Church Street to make left turns at the Fourth Street, Third Street and Lincoln Way intersections, alleviating congestion in this vital corridor of the City, connecting US 20 Bypass with the downtown and the new hospital and underpass. South of Fourth Street, a 3' shelf will be placed at the back of curb to facilitate snow removal. The existing concrete pavement will be replaced and the original storm trunk line will be used in place. Lighting and landscaping will be incorporated into the design. Traffic signals at the intersections of Third Street and Lincoln Way will be replaced and the signal at Fourth Street will be modernized as a part of this project.

- **Battell Elementary - Safe Routes to School Program**

The purpose of this project, funded from INDOT's SRTS Program, is to provide school aged children adequate sidewalk, curb ramps, and crosswalks to safely walk/bicycle to and from school or other activities. The City of Mishawaka is an all walk-on school system with minimal school bus transportation for the students. The sidewalk repairs will be performed along the path utilized by the students to access Battell Elementary school located on Cedar Street and will include ADA-compliant curb ramps, new sidewalks, signage and pavement markings at crosswalks. The design of the project is underway with the construction anticipated in July of 2012.

- **Main Street - Ardennes to Day**

In 2011, the initial project boundaries of Main Street from Ardennes Avenue north to Edison Road/Edison Lakes Parkway was expanded to include the section of Main Street from Edison north to Day Road. Specifically, the existing storm sewer was found to be in poor condition and undersized within the original project limits and a new storm sewer would be needed to serve the project improvements. This provided the flexibility to include additional pavement from the Main Street between Edison and Day Road. The project will include a center left turn lane, extension of storm trunk sewer from Ardennes north to Day Road, relocation of deceleration lanes, and many utility relocations. It also requires additional right-of-way due to the

construction of the center left turn lane. Consultants completed right-of-way requirements and identified landowners for acquisition. Legal descriptions, plats, and land acquisition was mostly completed in 2011 for the exception of a few parcels which we anticipate finalizing in early 2012. Construction may be phased over two construction seasons due to the extensive utility relocations. However, we do anticipate construction starting the 2012 season.

Public Safety Capital Improvements

As a City we continue to fund capital improvements for our public safety personnel. Rather than wait for things to wear out completely, we try to balance maximizing the life of the equipment while maintaining a regular replacement schedule.

In 2012, the Mishawaka Fire Department will undertake the task of developing a plan to replace some of its vital operating equipment over the next year. This equipment includes its Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (S.C.B.A.). The current S.C.B.A.'s are rapidly approaching the end of their service life and need to be replaced to meet current O.S.H.A. standards. Other equipment in need of replacement includes our LifePack 12 monitor/defibrillators. The current units are being phased out and soon will no longer be covered by the manufacturer.

A significant capital expense planned for 2012 includes the ordering and delivery of a new ambulance. The fire department has put out specifications for a new ambulance for its fleet. Bids will be open on February 21st, 2012. The new unit should be better capable of dealing with the increasing call volume and run total that has been trending steadily upward. In 2011, the Mishawaka Fire Department received and placed into operation its most sophisticated asset, an aerial truck with a 105' boom capable of reaching our tallest buildings.

As part of our ongoing replacement schedule, the Mishawaka Police Department will purchase eight new replacement squad cars along with a Police Accessory Package for each vehicle. Also, the plan is to purchase a newer version of eight work stations (in-car computers) for the vehicles. Five new Sig Sauer 40 caliber hand guns and five Remington 12 gauge shot guns will also be added to the Department's inventory.

Community Policing

In light of the two murders that occurred in the City at the end of 2011, I thought it was appropriate to mention the ongoing efforts of the Mishawaka Police Department and what to expect from the Department in 2012.

The Mishawaka Police Department continues to follow the community policing model, although we have customized it to fit the ever changing crime trends and challenges. The newly organized Street Crimes Unit established over a year ago has been instrumental in identifying areas of the City that need extra patrols or new neighborhood watch groups to help secure the safety of the community. This unit has actively engaged the community

and led efforts to engage the public in finding information and clues relative to the murders. Although an arrest has been made for one murder, the other remains under investigation and is of highest priority.

This Street Crimes Unit is able to utilize whatever tactics are needed including the use of new technology to solve the problems they are faced with. Moving forward, we have identified areas of the City void of watch groups with hopes of implementing new interest to partner with the Department. As a City, we are committed to keeping the integrity of our neighborhoods intact for an overall safer community.

Engaging our constituents, transparent government

In 2011, at my direction, the City reached out to our constituents in a number of ways. We held multiple public meetings on Mary Gibbard Pool and the proposed master plan for the park. We conducted an on-line survey advertised through the City Communicator for sidewalks and access issues. We engaged our future leaders/high school age children through the Mayor's Youth Council. Members of the City Council held their own district meetings reaching out providing both a resource and obtaining input. In my dozen plus years with the City, I also can't remember a time when we have had more budget meetings.

Although I personally believe we collectively did well, this is an area with newer technology and the resources we already have, we have the potential to become even more open and interactive. In 2012 we look forward to potentially having public access broadcast of Council meetings. We will also look to use the communicator to direct our constituents to our website for surveys or feedback similar to what we did with sidewalks in 2011.

Conclusion

I have taken the time to assemble bits and pieces from department annual reports for this summary. I would encourage everyone to take the time to read the individual department annual reports. If you do, you will learn in great detail about the City, the challenges we face, and what our priorities will be moving forward. I continue to be amazed at what the City is able to accomplish each and every year by good people working together.

Mishawaka continues build a community that future generations can be proud of, and that is an attractive environment to live, work, raise a family and retire in... as I indicated at the start, our promise is great. In 2012, together we will continue to cultivate a City that is fiscally stable, lean, and efficient. We will continue to maintain a welcoming business climate, provide world-class public services, and plan for the future.

I aspire, as you do, to serve leaving Mishawaka better off for future generations. As I conclude this year's State of the City, I'd like to announce a new planning initiative that we will begin in 2012.

As we look back over the past half dozen years as a City we have rightfully concentrated on the here and now. As a City we have worked through decreasing budgets and layoffs, constant changes relative to the circuit breaker and revenues, and lastly weathering the great recession.

As these cloudy times begin to fade, I am reminded of a quote by Thomas Edison:

“Good fortune is what happens when opportunity meets with planning.”

Mishawaka definitively is full of promise and opportunity. What we need now is to re-focus our efforts on long-range planning. Routinely, land use and comprehensive planning efforts are performed, cataloged, and shelved after a few years. What I would like to see different in this planning exercise is to focus on specific goals, objectives, wants and desires. What I would like to created are visions and goals for what Mishawaka will be like in 2033, our City's 200th birthday.

Mishawaka 200 / 2033 Planning Effort

Those of us with a little grey hair know that 20 years isn't that long, yet momentous change can happen. 20 Years ago Uniroyal was still in operation, much of Edison Lakes and the commercial development on Main Street did not exist, and computer aided dispatch/lap top computers in police cars were just a dream.

We know that the next 20 years we will continue to bring significant changes.

- Right now there is a State-wide plan to consolidate dispatch centers within each County, right now; we anticipate that there will be two dispatch centers in St. Joseph County compared to the current five locations.
- We know that with the changes in the law governing TIF districts that significant portions of the captured assessed valuation will be released and that the City will no longer be able to fund projects in the same way. What projects will have been completed before they expire?
- Twenty years ago, the City didn't have a splash pad, now they are incredibly popular and desired in more parks. What will the next great recreation amenity be?
- In the last twenty years we have seen decreases in owner occupied housing in older areas with smaller homes. Will that trend continue or will the recent housing crisis create a demand for smaller more affordable homes?

It is not only fun to ponder these questions, but I feel that is advantageous and productive to develop that vision and make calculated choices.

Although the process will be formed as we go and likely take longer than a year, in 2012 the City will seek the input of the public at large, school groups, elected and appointed officials, Department Heads, service organizations, and others. We will collectively identify the goals and issues that will shape the future of our City and move Mishawaka forward!

Thank You

Again, I want to thank all of Mishawaka for providing me the opportunity to serve. I am humbled by the trust that has been placed in me and it is the honor of my lifetime to serve the City I love and the citizens that I consider family and friends. It has also been my privilege to work shoulder to shoulder with the finest public servants anywhere. Together, we will work to make improvements that we all can be proud of, seizing opportunities for today and for future generations, making our contribution to the City that continues to be the best hometown in America. May God continue to bless our great City of Mishawaka.