

Central Services

Tim Ryan, Director - Central Services / Street Commissioner

The Central Service Division was created in 2010 with the merging of several departments. The Central Services is divided into five divisions within itself. They consist of the Street maintenance, Grounds maintenance, Building maintenance, Fleet maintenance and Traffic Division.

Motor Vehicle Highway

Motor Vehicle Highway, more commonly known as Street Department, is an essential part of the Central Services Division. The Street Department is responsible for the maintenance of all the public streets in the City of Mishawaka. The majority of our work is dictated by the seasons, so as seasons change so does our work process. Spring is the time of year when we break out our three street sweepers to begin cleaning up the debris left from the winter. Once sweeping begins, we continue to sweep for approximately 9 months out of the year. We make a complete cycle throughout the city every nine to eleven days. Spring also brings out the potholes, keeping six to eight employees busy making repairs.

Warmer weather allows us to work on many jobs, such as alley grading, street painting, street sweeping and resurfacing the roads that didn't fare well over the winter.

As fall approaches, we gear up for our annual leaf pick-up program. The leaf pick-up program begins in mid-October and continues through the first week in December. During this time, we make one complete pass through the city on a weekly basis. This program is one of the most successful programs in the area, serving the citizens of Mishawaka with pick up opportunities up to seven times over the course of the program. During the 2017 season, we removed 12,088 cubic yards of leaves.

Once leaf pick-up is completed, we gear up for the winter months. With 330 miles of roadway, snow removal is one of the most important tasks we perform. Utilizing 14 main-line plow trucks, our goal is to have the streets cleared 24-36 hours after the snow has stopped.

Traffic Department

The Mishawaka Traffic Department recorded 895 tasks in 2017 at a cost of \$39,088. These tasks consisted of sign repairs, new installations, inspections, field data collection and manufacturing of signs.

Along with the daily maintenance and installation of signs, the Traffic Department is also responsible for the pavement markings applied to the road surfaces, such as center lines, skip lines, fog lines, stop bars, crosswalks and directional arrows.

As in past years, we continue to support the various departments in the City with their graphic needs, utilizing our high definition printer to create banners, backgrounds and specialized graphics.

Grounds Maintenance

It is the responsibility of the Central Services Department to maintain all green areas of city owned properties consisting of nearly 700 acres. We are currently on a 5-day mowing schedule that has 8 full-time employees and up to 8 seasonal workers. Some of our smaller projects include weed eating, edging, blowing off sidewalks, picking up trash and tree removal in all City parks. Some of our larger projects include stump grinding, cutting down trees along the Riverwalk and pouring concrete for new benches and trash cans. We are also responsible for maintaining the City's baseball/softball diamonds and the set-up and break-down for special events within the City.

During the winter months, we remove snow on nearly 15 miles of sidewalks. These areas include the Riverwalk, all City lots, business office, City Hall, sidewalks on all bridges and all other walkways adjacent to city-owned property.

Some accomplishments performed by Central Services in 2017:

- Installation of the Twin Branch Playground
- Installation of paver bricks on Riverwalk

Building/Facilities Maintenance

It is the responsibility of the Central Services Facilities Maintenance Department to service and maintain over 300,000 square feet of city owned buildings. Some examples are the Fire Stations, Police Department, City Hall and other business offices. The Maintenance Department addresses plumbing, electrical, lighting, and general environmental issues in and around these facilities. In addition, we maintain an extensive amount of irrigation systems surrounding these buildings and parks within the city.

Our department is also responsible for janitorial services in each of these buildings on a daily basis. In the past year we have revamped the cleaning procedures with a new-check off system. This allows our employees to be able to perform in a more efficient and timely manner. It also allows our employees to be better able to address other areas within the facilities, helping make these environments cleaner and safer for everyone.

With the expansion of the city and its facilities, we hope to continue our level of service effectively and efficiently. We feel confident that we will be able to demonstrate continuous improvement in the services we provide.

Fleet Maintenance

The Fleet Maintenance Division is responsible for the maintenance, repairs and fueling of all City of Mishawaka and Mishawaka Utility vehicles. These services range from oil changes to engine rebuilds. In 2016, Fleet Maintenance recorded 1,223 repairs at a cost of \$232,425. The City of Mishawaka also used 183,228 gallons of unleaded gas and 87,814 gallons of diesel fuel at total cost of \$450,321. With the addition of the automated carwash, we were able to provide 6,126 washes in 2017.

Parkview Apartment Fire

I would like to recognize two Central Service employees for their selfless act on Wednesday, July 19, 2017.

On that evening, Adam Gilson and Brandon Voorde were scheduled to work the Kamm Island Fest at 7:00 pm. They rode to work together and stopped at the gas station on the way in. When leaving, they noticed smoke coming from the Parkview Apartments. They pulled over to the side of the road and called 911.

While waiting for Dispatch to answer, they noticed that there were tenants or bystanders standing outside the dwelling. After informing Dispatch about the fire, they ran to the apartment building. The first section door was locked, so Brandon forced it open and placed a rug in front of the doors to keep them from closing shut behind them. The first two sections of the building were quickly filling with smoke, so they worked together, pounding on doors, yelling "FIRE" to get the tenants attention and help them to get out to safety. Brandon helped an elderly person, with their oxygen tank get out of the basement in one of the sections. Adam escorted a mother and several children out from the top floor of another section. The mother carried some of the children, and Adam carried one and held onto another's hand until they were safely outside. Both men ran back into the building checking all four floors, in each section, until everyone was out safely.

When the Fire Department arrived, Adam and Brandon informed them which rooms were locked and there was no answer, and which ones were clear. When they asked the Fire Department if there was anything else they could do, they were told by MFD that they had already helped enough. When they called me to let me know what had transpired, I asked them to get some trucks and barricades to block traffic. They waited at the scene for me to arrive and relayed this heroic story to me. They then left and proceeded to Kamm Island to finish the balance of their overtime for the night.