

2009 State of the Village Address

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This is the third year I have shared with all of you the status and direction of the Village.

As we are all aware, throughout our State and our Nation we are experiencing troubling economic times.

Corporations as well as Federal and Local Governments are seeking new innovative ways to provide goods and services.

Communities must work together to provide services.

New and innovative ways of maintaining our service level to our constituents must be formulated, we need to lay aside whatever preconceived differences we have about each other and work together in providing our Communities with the best possible services in the most efficient manor.

We, at the Village of Mt. Pleasant, have been leading the way in exploring innovative ways to provide efficient services. We have partnered with our neighboring Communities by combining Dispatch and Fire/EMS services. In this partnership we have provided the framework to not only save money in the present but to help mitigate the accelerating cost of protective services well into the future. As we continue to erase our corporate boundaries with inter-municipal shared services our citizens will receive a higher level of service at a cost we can all live with.

Our Community is still growing, although not at the rate of previous years, we must take heart that Mt. Pleasant is still the Community many are choosing to call home.

Perhaps it is because we have proactively addressed the issues of our time and have been able to make constructive decisions designed to serve the Community as a whole.

Or maybe it is because we are an environmentally responsible Community as demonstrated in the Pike River restoration project. This project has gained national recognition. I applaud the Storm Water Commission for its efforts. They have applied for and received numerous grants for this very worthwhile project.

Or it may be just for the fact we are a balanced urban Community which invests in parks, bike trails, and recreation programs second to none.

Whichever the reason people choose Mt. Pleasant, the burden of fiscal responsibility for providing the needed services rests with the Board and I assure you it is a responsibility we take seriously. Mt. Pleasant has consistently had one of the lowest municipal tax rates in the County.

As we move forward in 2009 we look forward to the continuing development of the new Village Hall campus including our potential partnership with Razor Sharp in the development of a recreation center. With the development of our 90th street campus we will provide a sustainable public amenity to serve our Village for generations to come. The Ad Hoc Committee will be making the architect recommendation soon.

We will continue to strengthen our relationship with the Village of Sturtevant. Our commitment to consolidation of services is clear. We are confident that we will together work our way through any issue that confronts us as our two Communities continue its historical journey. We will open the door to our other neighbors to join us in exploring consolidation of services. We will invite Caledonia and someday the City of Racine to join in our collective vision. Our times demand we set aside the parochial protectionist thinking and forge new alliances that benefit the people we serve.

Our Storm Water Commission has continued its work:

In 2008, Phase 4a and 4b of the Pike River Restoration came to completion, which included multiple acres of water quality ponds and roughly one half mile of newly constructed/renovated channel. This construction took place nearly one mile north of STH 11 just east of Willow Road.

The Storm Water Utility has received grant monies for the paving of approximately 1.5 miles of bike trail within the Pike River-Phase 4 corridor. This work is planned for 2009.

Nearly one half mile of channel renovations/improvements are planned for Phase 5 of the Pike River Restoration Project in 2009. This will bring completed work from the headwaters near CTH C all the way to STH 11.

In Parks and recreation all Village parks will have the installation of At least one park bench and one bike rack to be completed in spring of 2009. As our recreation program continues to grow we have added kick-ball and golf to our recreation program offerings. We also will continue the development of the pike river bike trail and the planting of trees where needed to beautify our parks. Our Village continues to develop public park land to preserve open space for our residents for years to come.

In our public works activity the Village has completed construction of Stuart Road with new marked bike lanes and parking lanes which served to expand our bike trail network. The Stuart Road project also included the installation of a municipal water main. The annual Village paving program reconditioned pavements on 2 miles of Village roads and completed safety improvements at the intersection of Emmertsen Road at 16th Street and at Providence Drive at Biscayne Avenue. In addition new development of the Tax Increment Finance District constructed over half a mile of new roads to serve the commercial development in TID#1.

The 2009 construction season will bring a reduction in construction activities, but will maintain the Village streets with the 2009 paving program which will resurface 3.8 miles of streets. Resurfacing of Lathrop Avenue and Old Spring Street is planned along with pavement restoration in the Camelot Downs subdivision and three cul-de-sacs off of Old Spring Street. The Old Spring Street area paving will be scheduled for late summer to follow the Racine County project to reconstruct Spring Street and signalize the intersection of Airline Road.

We shall continue to work with existing and new businesses through our partnership with RCEDC to retain and attract sustainable jobs to our area. There is continued interest in Mt. Pleasant as a place to locate.

Although we live in uncertain times, we continually move forward as a Community. We must believe in the future, we must believe in ourselves. We can not say "That Can't be Done", we must say "How Can we make it Possible".

Mt. Pleasant is the future, Mt. Pleasant can write that future by taking the lead in innovative thinking and working beyond ourselves to reach out to our neighbors, roll up our sleeves and go to work together.