

Mayor
Dev Trivedi

City Clerk
Alice Matteucci

Administrator
Tim Schloneger

CITY OF LOCKPORT



“WE CARE”
www.lockport.org

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Dick Van Dyke - 1st Ward
Joe Fracaro - 2nd Ward
Brian Smith - 2nd Ward
Tom Kelly - 3rd Ward
Bob Morris - 3rd Ward
John Robert Krzos - 4th Ward
Robert Perretta - 4th Ward

The Lockport Reporter

Winter 2010



A MESSAGE FROM MAYOR TRIVEDI

Hello Families and Friends:

As a “We Care” community, I want to thank you all for taking time to read your newsletter. I trust that all residents of Lockport had

wonderful holidays. I truly hope that the New Year brings true prosperity in our community and that many dreams come true for our families, friends and country.

Since the last time we met in July 2009, many positive things have happened in our city. At the council level, (as expected) we have had our fair share of disagreements on some issues, but all in all, I MUST say that everyone is working very well together by showing professionalism in their transactions. This, I believe is very healthy for Lockport.

As promised in the last newsletter, I pledged to work with the elected officials in the surrounding communities on three main issues of importance – and I am happy to say that the main goal of addressing them was justly accomplished. The issues were:

- Addressing property taxes in Homer and Lockport Townships for city residents
- Addressing overcrowding at the Lockport Township High School (so far we have had two summits)
- Condition of city streets in the older section of town

As some of you already know, at the conclusion of the first Property Tax Forum, it was unanimously decided by the participants to hold an annual forum. So, the next one will be in July 2010.

For point number two, the Lockport Township High School Board, Homer Glen Mayor Jim Daley, Crest Hill Mayor Ray Soliman, our City Council members and I participated in two High School Summits where we discussed the issue of overcrowding. The next summit will be held at Homer Glen Village Hall on Thursday, February 11, 2010 at 7 p.m. We would appreciate if you could join and give us your input on how to

address the overcrowding issue. The steering group would truly like to hear your thoughts.

Finally, to address point three, over this past summer and fall, the city fixed and resurfaced some of our deteriorating streets. Some of the streets were paved in-house saving thousands of dollars. As I have said before, for the next three years we will continue to work on more infrastructure-related issues such as streets and water mains. As a side note, we are very thankful to the Illinois Department of Transportation for resurfacing one of our main roads, New Avenue (from Route 171 to Lemont). We appreciate the patience of our residents during that reconstruction period. Also, the city partially completed the 151st Street Reconstruction Project, which included curb, gutter and newly surfaced 151st Street from Farrell Road to Archer Avenue. The remaining work will be done in Spring 2010. You can read more about this road work in the Engineering Department report in this newsletter.

RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

On the residential front, a few months ago, the city passed a “one of a kind” program, newly introduced to the Chicagoland area, to stimulate the new home building in Lockport. This program offers a \$5,000 (maximum) incentive from the City, with a \$5,000 (minimum) match from the homebuilder; a total of \$10,000 to new construction homebuyers. We have found that this “Economic Stimulus Grant Program” is having a great impact. Since September, the program has spurred 17 new housing starts. This program generates private investment in the community, encourages commercial development, and provides jobs for all trades in the construction industry.

COMMERCIAL/RETAIL UPDATE

On the economic forefront, as you all know, it does not look very promising in the immediate future, due to this economy. The Target development is still on hold. However, according to the latest information submitted, Target is still planning on coming to this site. We will not know the firm timing until sometime in 2010. Without this main anchor, the other outlots are on hold

too. In the meantime, we continue to meet with other home improvement centers to occupy the current Home Depot site, since it has officially pulled out of this development. We hope to see some movement in 2010-2011. However, as the new developments are on hold, we continue to see interest in re-developing empty retail centers and commercial buildings in Lockport.

In addition, considering the dismal state of our economy, we are very happy to have the doors open up for the new Advocate Medical Center on Ninth Street, as well as Stefanelli's (also on Ninth Street), who will specialize in Italian sandwiches, deli, and specialty wines. Furthermore, we are very happy to see Nicky's Gyros restaurant reopen after extensive remodeling. It looks wonderful!

BUDGET

The economic forefront has definitely hindered the city's receipt of revenues. State-shared revenues are down, as well as growth-related revenues. Therefore, this City Council, upon the City Administrator's recommendation, conscientiously reduced the city's expenditures by nearly \$850,000 within the existing budget. Currently, we are looking at year-to-date trends in our budget, and based on this information, we will make any necessary adjustments to our expenses. We will be discussing this expected shortfall in the upcoming months.

CITY WATER

For the past year, we have been informing residents about a violation that the city has received from the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) for failing to provide a safe source of **raw water**. [Please note, it is the **raw water only**, not the water coming from your faucets at home. **The raw water is the ground water prior to getting treated and sent to the homeowners.**] The city has entered into a Compliance Commitment Agreement (CCA) with the IEPA and hired a consultant to address the CCA and any other water system concerns. The consultant's recommendations are described in the "Water System Master Plan" that has been reviewed by the council. In order to address the CCA, we have been given some alternatives, one of which is to bring in Lake Michigan Water. However, the City Council has not firmed up on which alternative they would prefer. I want to assure all residents that no decisions have yet been made. I have asked the council to listen to each of you at a public meeting prior to making any decision; so please join us in the future for any public meetings on this CCA issue.

DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT

Now I would like to shift your attention to our historic downtown, a part of town that has tremendous potential. First, to implement the Downtown Master Plan, a Steering Committee was formed, followed by the formation of the Downtown Development Committee (DDC), whose main goal is to guide the master plan. As of today, the DDC has met three times, holding a monthly meeting on the fourth

Tuesday of every month. If you would like to volunteer on the DDC, please call Jodi Herman at City Hall (extension 2102). For more information on the DDC and the downtown plan, please read the "Downtown Redevelopment Update" in the *City Scoops* section.

CANAL DAYS EVENT – UNDERGOING CHANGES

On another note, before we know it, Canal Days will be here. In order to plan for improved activities, we have met several times since July 2009 with the previous Canal Days volunteers, the Lockport Chamber of Commerce, and Lockport Township Park District staff. We thanked the Canal Days volunteers for their several years of service and dedication to this community event. We also recognized them at the City Council meeting in July. At the end of our discussions, the past volunteers made a decision to dissolve their committee, which we regretfully accepted. As of today, the city will be steering the future Canal Days event, along with assistance from the Park District and the Chamber of Commerce. This new committee also plans on working with several civic groups within our community to bring them on board, as they have helped Canal Days for the past years as well. We all plan on working together to introduce some new activities that will commemorate the Illinois and Michigan Canal.

VOLUNTEER(S) YOU SHOULD KNOW

Speaking of volunteers, our city *runs* on volunteers. Without their help and dedication, we would be nowhere in accomplishing many huge tasks and projects. They have given so much to our community that we all want to thank them. In this spirit of giving and sharing their selfless services to our citizens, I again want to publicly thank them for their loyalty to Lockport. If anyone is interested in helping us in any capacity, please do not hesitate to contact Jodi Herman at City Hall (extension 2102).

Let me conclude by saying that over these past seven months, I have been very indebted to all of you who have stopped in my office or have seen me and congratulated me on the work that we are doing together on behalf of our residents. I see a true community spirit from all residents of Lockport. I have met with various business leaders numerous times and they have nothing but the best of Lockport on their minds. We are truly blessed with great residents and businesses. Until the next newsletter, take care of yourself and your families. *Mayor Dev Trivedi*

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