



Office of Mayor Peter Schwartzman

State of City, November 2022

By Peter Schwartzman

Delivered to Chamber of Commerce's Luncheon (abridged version done via pre recording)

Thank you for this opportunity to deliver the State of the City today. I am glad to be with you, if only virtually. I was at the National League of Cities City Summit this past weekend and was unable to return in time.

I have so much to share with you as there is so much positive happening in Galesburg! 2021 was a "warm" up year. I was in my first term as Mayor and we had four new Councilors. 2022 took off! And you know what I am talking about...as you all were directly involved in these initiatives. My perch (which I am so privileged to sit on) allows me to see all of it happen (bird's eye view). And it is a wonderful view to have.

As there is a lot to say, I will hit the highlights. A longer version (the one provided here) will be available on the City's website for a more in-depth inspection. As always, if you have any questions, never hesitate to reach out to me for more information or clarity.

What were our accomplishments of 2022?

Here are the BIG items:

- We successfully articulated and unanimously approved our Strategic Plan, which includes 23 strategic goals which have measurables and specific dates for achievement
- We successfully completed the first scientifically conducted Community Survey identifying key areas of strength and opportunities for improvement
- We completed our search for a new City Manager. Mr. Gerald Smith started on Nov. 7 and he is off and running!
- We created a new position in the City, a Special Projects Coordinator (I hope Mr. Simkins is in the audience). He, Mr. Simkins, has led many projects so far with a great crew of volunteers. The most notable, as described in the paper recently, is Project 350...the goal to plant 350 trees over five years...we have exceeded expectations this our first year by planting 112 trees throughout the city in 2022
- We revamped the Youth Commission, which now has 7 youth members and 4 adults
- We created an Airport Commission
- We promised \$1 million in funding to the RRHOF (Railroad Hall of Fame) project
- We supported large solar array installations, including ones at logistic park, south Farnham St., and recently put out an RFP for one at the City Water Plant. Some of these are Community-Driven Solar projects which will bring reduced electricity costs to low-income residences and annual contributions to community organizations.



Office of Mayor Peter Schwartzman

- We installed a Warming Shelter at Hawthorne Center
- We provided a \$775,000 Grant to the new library. These funds were paid out in December 2021. This will be dedicated to purchase and construct technology at the facility. The Galesburg Public Library said that the new building will offer expanded technological services to residents. The grant from the City will allow the library to make more public computers available, provide a new computer and technology lab and A/V-equipped rooms that allow for virtual work, interviews and meetings. Additionally, they intend to have high speed wireless internet access available for public use within the footprint of the property, allowing 24/7 accessibility for individuals without reliable internet access.

Park & Recreation:

- Installation of a major water feature at Lakeside Water Park. Kudos to Mrs. Varner for getting this open on time!
- A grant received (\$400,000 from IDNR) to make major improvements to H.T. Custer Park. The City of Galesburg was a 2022 OSLAD Grant recipient, which will be utilized to improve H.T. Custer Park. This is a \$400,000 approved grant, with a \$400,000 local match. The scope of the project will include a new playground, walking path, new bathrooms, parking lot and a shelter. This will help enhance the park which already has a baseball field and wading pool, and is located on the south side of the city.
- Committed support for renovating our indoor pool facility, Hawthorne Pool (a real community effort)! A \$4 investment in our community! Opening in the Spring 2023!
- Bunker Links Awards and 2022 Records Record Breaking Rounds of Golf for the months of May, June, July and October. There have been over 28,000 rounds of golf in 2022 surpassing 27,000 in 2021. We are proud to announce that PGA Golf Professional, Bryan Luedtke, was selected as the Public Merchandiser of the Year by the Iowa PGA Committee.
- We completed engineering work for Lake Storey's "close the loop" on the multi-purpose path. The Engineering agreement for the multi-purpose path has been approved by the Council and has been submitted to IDOT for approval. We are waiting on IDIOT's approval of the environmental aspect of the project to begin design work. It is likely the project will be put out to bid in June 2023 with construction to start in July.

Public Safety

Fire Department

- Currently the Galesburg Fire Department structure is composed of 42 sworn personnel. The proposed 2023 budget adds three firefighters (one per shift) to bring the total number of sworn personnel to 45.
- Reasons for the addition of three firefighters are as follows:
 - GFD staffing has dropped from the highest staffing levels of 51 sworn personnel. In 2013, the GFD had 45 personnel (the proposed number now). The GFD responded to 3,760 emergency calls that year. In 2021, the GFD responded to 5,109 - an increase of



Office of Mayor Peter Schwartzman

1,349 emergency calls with 3 fewer personnel. This year the Galesburg Fire Department is on track to surpass the 2021 emergency call volume.

- To ensure emergency coverage for the City of Galesburg citizens, the Galesburg Fire Department maintains an 11 firefighter minimum per 24 hour shift. To maintain this coverage, with the decreased number of personnel, the overtime budget has grown to \$344,065.89 in 2021, and will be close to that again in 2022. This includes mandating overtime for firefighters at certain times.
- The increased amount of overtime is negatively impacting the GFD personnel due to staff working excessive hours of overtime. The addition of one firefighter per 24 hour shift for a total of three will decrease the 2023 overtime by approximately \$100,000 (new firefighters will be placed on the three shifts once they graduate from the fire academy in May). This will save the City approximately \$223,000 in overtime costs in 2024. The savings in decreased overtime will offset the cost for the three additional firefighters.

Police Department

The summer of 2021 saw an alarming uptick in gun-related events. We responded immediately to this with the formation of a new law enforcement task force: collaborative effort among many law enforcement groups. We also added new positions for 2022: 2 New police officers & 2 new Community Service Officers. Recently, hearing that officers were burdened with excessive overtime, we agreed to transition to a 12-hour shift starting in Jan. 2023. This has the following benefits:

- improved supervision
- 5% increase in hours worked at straight time (not OT)
- 78 more days off a year for officers allowing for an improved quality of life
- Improvement in overtime costs once human power stabilizes

Given the difficulty in filling positions, In August 2022 we created monetary incentives for new officers (or lateral transfers): \$10,000 sign-on bonus paid over 4 years; \$1,000.00 moving expenses. To date we have had two new officers sign on with the City and took advantage of the new bonus programs.

Economic Development (working with Mr. Springer and KCAP):

- Creation of four economic development grants to stimulate growth in a few key areas (minority/female owned startups, southside development, urban agriculture)
- Support of CEO Program (“Creating Entrepreneurial Opportunities”) and the GAVC Vocational Program: seed money to create a Skills USA chapter for GAVC (support picked up by Galesburg Community Foundation in future years). These efforts are focused on developing skilled laborers in our community and diminishing “brain drain.”



Office of Mayor Peter Schwartzman

Facade Grants

- Program started in 2009; 28 facade projects completed, two currently in progress (Iron Spike - 150 E. Simmons St., Cherry St. Brewing Company - 57 S. Cherry St.)
- Total estimated investments in these projects \$3,3M ; the City has contributed: \$875K and Downtown Council \$500,000.

Neighborhood and Housing Rehab

- Illinois Housing Development Authority - Single Family Rehabilitation Grant. Renovations completed on 4 homes so far, for an estimated total investment of \$174,870
- HUD Lead Based Paint Hazard Reduction Program - Renovations completed on 14 homes, for an estimated total investment of \$254,425. There are currently 5 under contract and 3 close to having a contract signed.
- Housing Repair Program - This is the locally funded program started this last Spring. We have had 22 projects completed and 9 more that have been approved for work.

Lead abatement

- There are 397 houses on the list to have their lead service lines replaced in Phase 6. This will take care of removing lead service lines in the entire City. In total there will be 3171 lead service lines replaced. The City started replacing lines in 2016. A total of \$12 million of 100% forgivable loans were received from the IEPA for these projects. Work is anticipated to be completed in August 2023.

What else is BIG!?

- I3 brought residential fiber installation to Gburg, should cover entire city in 2023
- New, much larger and expanded location for Civic Arts Center
- Major lift to Galesburg Symphony Project

What will 2023 Bring? I can't wait to see! Know this: We are moving forward, boldly, proudly and with every one of you in mind and heart! Have a wonderful holiday season. I wish the best to you and all of your loved ones! See you next year!

Mayor Peter