

2016 State of the Village Report

As the elected officers of the community, the Village Board and I are committed to providing residents and business-owners with an honest appraisal of how we believe the community is faring. What follows is an expression of that commitment, in the form of the first State of the Village report to be officially issued for the Village of West Dundee.

All told, the state of the Village remains strong and we look to continue to build upon that solid foundation in the coming year.

Board Progress on 2015 Goals

For the second year, the West Dundee Village Board established a list of defined goals—in this case, for the 2015 calendar year. A total of 10 actions were included on that list; for an update on how the organization performed on each individual goal, please see the attached 2015 Goals Final Status Report.

The vast majority of these goals are ongoing and mid- to long-term in nature, however significant progress or partial completion has been achieved in regards to 9 out of 10 of the established goals.

Economic Development

The Village has endured substantial and sustained impacts to its local, retail-based economy over the past decade, due in large measure to overall economic conditions combined with dramatically increased competition from neighboring communities. To mitigate these impacts, the Village of West Dundee has endeavored this past year to undertake careful study of various aspects of the local and regional economy with an eye toward developing thoughtful and articulate plans that we can act upon to help strengthen the West Dundee bottom line. Some of the 2015 activities include:

- **Downtown Plan:** In April 2015, the Village Board approved this comprehensive document. Arrived at through a participatory community process, the Downtown Plan will guide ongoing efforts to revitalize downtown by accommodating context-sensitive new commercial, residential, and mixed-use development, encouraging thoughtful rehabilitation of existing historic buildings, and attracting compatible new businesses while retaining valuable existing ones. Manifestations of the plan include 109 & 111 West Main Street receiving completely new exteriors, the opening of Dooley's Irish Ale House at 98 West Main Street, and permitting for rehabilitation of the former Clearwater Theater, which the owner hopes to open by the end of 2016 as RocHaus.
- **Spring Hill Mall:** The Village approved plans for a more than \$40-million redevelopment of the former JC Penny's wing. Included in the new "lifestyle" format will be an eight-screen Cinemark multiplex, two development pads for planned restaurants, a flexible development pad for retail and dining options, and the conversion of formerly internal space to an outward orientation to integrate the new pedestrian format with the existing mall. This mix of buildings will be ensconced by an amenity-laden public plaza that will encourage gathering, browsing, and potentially al fresco dining. Demolition and site preparation were completed in 2015. Cinemark will initiate the new development with its groundbreaking in Spring of 2016.
- **Business Activity Around Spring Hill Mall:** Adaptively reusing the big box building that formerly housed Target, LifeZone 360 is a flexible athletic field house that accommodates multiple sports, including lacrosse and soccer. While work is ongoing, the project's first phase opened in time for the 2015 holiday season. This unique project has the potential to seasonally

attract athletes and their families from the Village and surrounding communities and could serve as one of many complementary developments to the greater Spring Hill Mall trade area.

- **Oakview Corporate Park:** Renishaw, a United Kingdom-based global supplier of products for measurement, motion control, spectroscopy, and additive manufacturing (3-D printing) broke ground in October of 2015 on a regional center on approximately 11 acres within the Oakview Corporate Park. The company plans to employ more than 125 people at the site in corporate, warehousing, and manufacturing capacities with an expected move-in by late summer of 2016. The site has been planned to accommodate potential future expansion. Renishaw's commitment represents a key step in the full realization of the Oakview Corporate Park.
- **Senior Housing Projects:** 2015 saw two senior housing developments proposed for the Village, with one focused on serving the assisted living and memory care markets and the other targeting affordable independent living. These projects offering seniors housing choice are slated to receive formal consideration by the Village in 2016.

Finance

The Village of West Dundee has long held a fiscally conservative approach, especially in light of the lessening of sales tax revenues derived since 2005. Some of the key activities from 2015 include:

- **Balanced Budget Approved:** The Village Board adopted a balanced budget for FY2015-16.
- **Revised Budget Summary:** Developed to help make understanding the Village budget easier for residents, West Dundee released a graphical overview of the budget and some of its key changes.
- **No New Fees Implemented:** The organization added no new fees in its 2015-16 Budget, while maintaining a balanced municipal budget. The Board continues its efforts and responsibility to ensure appropriate fiscal responsibility and maintaining the high levels of service that West Dundee residents have come to expect from its Village.
- **Issuance of Debt:** The Village refunded a 2001 Bond Issue for the purpose of facilitating an interest rate reduction, resulting in a total interest cost savings to the Village of \$43,000 annually, or a total of \$345,000 over the remaining life of the bonds.

An additional \$4,000,000 of new debt was added to this issue, to fund two specific improvement programs: The long anticipated widening Huntley Road to 5 lanes next year, and the implementation of certain elements of the Downtown Plan, which was adopted in 2015.

- **Bond Rating:** The Village maintains a strong bond rating of Aa2.
- **GFOA Award:** For the 20th straight year, the Village of West Dundee received the Certification of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting from the Government Finance Officers Association.
- **Strong Fund Balance:** The Village maintains a reserve of nearly \$2 million, or 25% of its operating budget. This percentage reserve is consistent with GFOA recommended guidelines for municipal reserves.

- **Auditor Report:** The Village of West Dundee received and approved its annual audit this year, with the report confirming that the Village's financial status and systems are solid and comport with Government Accounting Standards Board (GASB) guidelines.

Public Safety

The Village of West Dundee operates two fire stations and one police station, serving a residential population of 7,300 and a daytime population of in excess of 12,000. While the professional police and fire staffing levels have remained relatively static over the past several years, as a result of retirements within each department, upward mobility was made possible for existing staff.

- **Fire Service Consolidation Study:** The Village again made significant progress in collaborating with neighboring fire departments, working towards our goal of functional consolidation within the fire service. The consolidation study was completed by ESCI (Emergency Services Consulting International) and was presented to the 3 respective boards in October, 2015. An Executive Summary was prepared and approved outlining the next steps. An effort was started on trying to legislatively change State Law to make it more conducive to consolidation of fire departments. Moving forward in 2016 a Regional Board and work groups will be developed to facilitate consolidation.
- **New Squad Cars:** The Department has nearly completed it's goal of refreshing the fleet of front line patrol vehicles. With the exception of only two front line squad cars, the remainder of the front-line patrol fleet has been replaced with modern Ford Police Utility Interceptors. These new vehicles are safer, offer more cargo space for specialized equipment, and are more fuel efficient than the previous Police Interceptors (Ford Crown Victoria). It is expected that the remaining two older vehicles will be replaced this year completing the switch-over of the front line fleet.
- **Police Contract Approval:** Although a contract agreement was reached in 2014, it is now time to begin negotiations on a new labor contract as the current contract is scheduled to expire on April 30, 2016. The sworn full-time police officers will continue to operate under the terms of the expired contract until a new agreement is reached.
- **Sworn Officer Promotions:** In June of 2015, Lt. James Schuldt retired from the West Dundee Fire Department after 35-years of service. Based on the results of the Fire Lieutenant's Eligibility process conducted by the West Dundee Police & Fire Commission, Firefighter/Paramedic David Strossner, a 13-year employee of the department, received the highest score and was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant in August. The department was also able to hire 10 new part-time firefighters to assist in manning.

The Police Department saw the retirement of Lt. Richard Riggle in late 2014 after 27 years on the force. In December of 2015, Sgt. Anthony Gorski, 28-year veteran, was promoted to Lieutenant. At the same time, James Breon, who has been a full-time West Dundee Police Officer for 12 years, was promoted to the rank of Sergeant. As a result of these promotions, as well as the retirement of Officer Steve Pirtle in October after 25 years of service, the department was also able to promote two part-time officers to full-time status, Officer Nate Herman and Officer Paul Shipley.

Public Works

The public works team is divided into 3 divisions: Streets & Bridges, Buildings & Grounds, and the Water. The team is responsible for snow plowing, fall leaf collection, street light maintenance, street sweeping,

storm sewer system, downtown business district and Riverwalk maintenance, forestry programs, and the Village water system, among other services.

- **Salt and Snow Operations:** At the present time, it is anticipated that the minimum purchase requirement of 800 tons will be more than enough to address ice & snow control operations this season, and allow a surplus for use next season. That being said, a portion of the conservation principles employed during last year's salt shortage have been upheld during operations this season in the interest of being as efficient and cost-conscious as possible.
- **Tree Replacements Cooperative:** During the 2015 Parkway Tree Replacement Program, the Village again worked with three home owners associations (Grand Pointe, Carrington & Fairhills) to split the cost of tree replacements. As has been the case in previous years, these trees were inspected and ultimately removed due to damage caused by the Emerald Ash Borer.

Additionally, the Village worked to maximize participation in the 50/50 cost sharing program pertaining to individual residences outside of the home owners associations. In total, the program generated just over \$17,000 in additional revenue, which was used to replace 170 trees throughout the Village as a supplement to the approved budget.

- **Water Service Upgrades and Impacts:** Staff completed necessary modifications to the Kittridge Booster Station, which involved installation of a cross-tie valve and associated automation. On August 31, 2015, the Village Board awarded a contract to Independent Mechanical Industries to complete modifications to the Fifth Street Booster Station, as designed by Baxter & Woodman. The work at Fifth Street was substantially completed by mid-January of 2016. The completed modifications to both booster stations allow water to be transferred between all pressure zones in the Village's potable water system, which will significantly reduce the chance of pumping unsoftened water to the distribution system in the event of a major water treatment plant failure.
- **Road Projects:** In conjunction with Baxter & Woodman, the Village continued work on the development of preliminary plans and funding logistics for the forthcoming Huntley Road Improvements Project. Within the last year, the Phase II Engineering Agreement was secured, survey work was completed, a kick-off meeting was held with IDOT and KKCOM officials, the local match funding resolution was approved, the STP application was completed and submitted, soil boring and pavement core drilling was completed, additional funding was approved, right-of-way appraisals began and pre-final plans were completed and submitted to IDOT for approval.

An amount of \$250,000 was moved from right-of-way acquisition to construction in order to keep the project moving along, but even with that change; letting for the project was pushed back from April, 2016 to November, 2016.

Pursuit of the Boncosky Road Resurfacing Project resumed in 2015 as well. KKCOM approved funding for the project and preliminary plans were completed and submitted to IDOT. Letting for the project is anticipated in late May, 2016.

Communications and Public Participation

The Village of West Dundee strives to provide its citizens with information and opportunities for interaction, and does so via a variety of communications channels.

- **West Dundee Ambassadors Program:** The West Dundee Ambassadors (WDA) program was launched in 2014, with the intent of harnessing the volunteer spirit endemic to the community.

During 2015, an ad-hoc Education Committee was formed to explore ways that the community and Village can engage with our local schools. The 10-for-10 program, whereby residents visit specific businesses, spend \$10 and tell 10 friends about the business, was expanded from a single individual into a Shop Local Committee, and a total of 10 events were held in support of 23 independent West Dundee businesses and the whole of Spring Hill Mall.

Residents are invited to sign up for the WDA program. The Village Board and staff will work to identify opportunities for individuals to contribute to West Dundee in the ways that best suit their skills and interests.

- **Social Media:** In 2015, the Village ramped up its communication with residents on our Facebook and Twitter pages. We strive to provide information relevant to the West Dundee community on a near-daily basis, including notifications about Village services, community news and events, and public service announcements. By the end of the year, the Village of West had reached over 1400 likes on Facebook and over 200 Twitter followers.
- **Newsletter:** The Village reinstated the publication of the Village Newsletter on a twice annual basis, which is distributed in print to all West Dundee residents, as well as electronic distribution to the Village Newslist subscribers. The Newsletter is an excellent medium for advancing long-form information on Village activities and programs.
- **Email Blast Village Newslist:** The Village Newslist has been used by the Village for just over 6 years now, to provide important and timely updates and information to the community at an average rate of twice per month. We encourage all West Dundee residents and business owners to subscribe to this email distribution system by visiting the Village website, www.wdundee.org.
- **Village Website:** The Village continues to publish news, events, meeting minutes and agendas, service information, reports and forms, as well as other resources to support the community, online at www.wdundee.org. This format allows for easy accessibility of municipal information.

Special Events and Marketing

Despite the relatively small size of the organization, the Village of West Dundee either directly coordinates or strongly supports a several community events. Such events serve a variety of purposes, from recognizing veterans in our area to giving family-friendly activities for area families to providing additional foot-traffic to the community's downtown area. These events include:

- Heritage Fest (*September 16, 17 & 18, 2016*)
- Dickens in Dundee (*December 2 & 3, 2016*)
- Memorial Day Parade (*May 29, 2016*)
- Halloween Party (*October 22, 2016*)
- St. Patrick's Day Parade and Events (*March 11 & 12, 2016*)
- Volunteer of the Year Community Service Award Ceremony (*November 2016*)

Discussions continue regarding the potential for West Dundee to actively participate in funding and administration of the Discover Dundee marketing and events platform initiated in late 2013 by the Village of East Dundee to promote Downtown Dundee. The Village has identified potential funding sources and has engaged the downtown business and property owners in discussion about the cost-benefit of such.



2015 VILLAGE BOARD GOALS – Final Status Update

- Goal #1:** Advance the analysis of the proposal for Fire Department consolidation between West Dundee, Carpentersville and the East Dundee Fire Protection District. Continue to evaluate ways to achieve functional consolidation through the sharing of services and equipment in an effort to reduce capital purchases and maintenance costs.
- Status:** *Completed. The Emergency Services Cooperative Efforts Study was completed by Emergency Services Consulting International (ESCI) in collaboration with the Fire Chiefs of the 3 respective entities over a period of 10 months. The final study report was presented to the Village Board on October 19, 2015. Efforts toward a functional consolidation continue, including shared services and engagement with State legislators.*
- Goal #2:** Complete and formalize the adoption of the Downtown Improvement/Redevelopment Plan. Devise strategy to execute the plan's recommendations and findings, as well as prioritizing and budgeting for implementation of the plan.
- Status:** *Completed. The Village's first formal Downtown Plan was developed by Hitchcock Design Group through a yearlong process involving significant stakeholder and community engagement. The Downtown Plan was presented to the Village Board and officially adopted in April, 2015. Progress continues toward Phase 1 implementation of this plan, including future redevelopment and public improvements along First Street south of Main St, as well as commercial investment into historic structures on Main St.*
- Goal #3:** Adopt the Village's first formal Economic Development Plan. Work toward both the implementation of the EDP, and the review and evaluation of procedures and programs related to community and economic development, in conjunction with the new Community Development Director.
- Status:** *Completed. Through review and evaluation of the development areas of the Village, attraction and retention strategies and other economic development tools, a comprehensive Economic Development Plan (EDP) was compiled for use in promoting economic development opportunities in West Dundee. The EDP was adopted by the Village Board on April 20, 2015 and continues to be utilized as intended.*
- Goal #4:** Continue discussions with Rouse Properties, owners of Spring Hill Mall, in service of the development of a public-private partnership aimed at reinventing the site as a retail, entertainment, dining, and office destination.
- Status:** *Completed. After several months of negotiation, as well as financial studies and evaluation, the Village Board approved both a Term Sheet and a Sales Tax Sharing Agreement in April of 2015 to facilitate the \$40-million reinvestment into Spring Hill Mall by mall owner Rouse Properties. Demolition of the redevelopment area was completed in late 2015, and construction of Cinemark Theaters is anticipated to begin this spring.*
- Goal #5:** Encourage continued community involvement through the use of the West Dundee Ambassadors program. Create ad hoc committees to assist the Village in obtaining public input and participation.
- Status:** *Completed. Two ad-hoc committees were initiated in 2015, an Education Committee, formed to explore ways that the community and Village can engage with and support our local schools, and a Shop Local Committee, formed to expand upon efforts initiated by an individual Ambassador to promote and support out local business community.*



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Goal #6: Continue to work to complete the annexation agreement for the area commonly known as the Galvin Property, located on Randall Road, from Rt. 72 to Binnie Road. Pursue discussion on the annexation of the NW and SW corners of Rt. 72 and Randall Road.

Status: *Ongoing. Discussions with the property owners continue.*

Goal #7: Review and evaluate village-wide utility systems, including water and sewer. Under the new Public Works Director, establish an aggressive capital and preventative maintenance program regarding critical infrastructure needs and projects, including an updated 5-year capital maintenance program.

Status: *Completed. Complete inspections of the Angle Tarn Water Treatment Plant and Spring Hill Water Tower were conducted by professional engineering firms to identify and provide a timetable for necessary repairs and improvements. A 5-year capital plan was developed concerning water infrastructure needs. An updated inventory and maintenance program was identified for hydrants and water main isolation valves, to be implemented in 2016.*

Goal #8: Build on community outreach programs in the schools, businesses and neighborhoods, especially in light of recent national and local events that have strained relations and trust between Police Departments and the communities they serve.

Status: *Completed. The West Dundee Police Department began participation in the US Dept of Justice "Coffee with a Cop" initiative, hosting their first event in November 2015 to provide an informal meet up between Police Officers and community members to discuss concerns, answer questions and strengthen relationships. Weekly visits to DMS by the department's school safety liaison have continued, with discussions recently initiated in regards to expanding that role for the benefit of all West Dundee schools.*

Goal #9: Continue to improve upon communication with West Dundee residents and business owners through social media, Village Newslist email subscription, the Village website and printed Newsletters. Reestablish a twice-annual printed Newsletter to both the business community and residents.

Status: *Complete. The Village has developed a robust and regular flow of information to the community via social media, specifically Facebook and Twitter. Use of the Village Newslist email system for news and information with broad impact continues, with an average of 2 releases per month. The Village Newsletter has been reinstated in biannual editions, which are distributed by mass mailing to all residents, as well as by email to all Village Newslist subscribers, and posted at the Village's website.*

Goal #10: Complete the update of the municipal finance software at Village Hall, which will allow for better data analysis and communication of financial information to both the Board and community.

Status: *This software upgrade was placed on hold due to concerns of cost effectiveness.*