

From the Mayor - June 2012

Looking forward following my first five months as your Mayor, I want to share some of the progress and planning that your elected leaders have engaged in to chart the direction of Warsaw and our community in the coming years. I am very proud that the City Council and Clerk-Treasurer have participated in a strategic planning exercise that helped develop some common goals for this administration.

The six identified goals of our plan are: growth management, business retention and expansion, business attraction, communication and process, downtown Warsaw, and neighborhood revitalization. All of our Council members have committed to these initiatives. It is very gratifying as Mayor to watch some of our newer Council members “dive in” and our more experienced members show leadership for more specific initiatives.

In addition to our elected officials, the services we provide as a city are under the guidance of a very responsive group of department heads. I have seen interdepartmental unity and collaboration as the result of unselfish leadership. As an example, we have four city departments involved in the Walk+Bike trail master planning (Parks and Rec, Building and Plan, Police, Street).

In addition to providing for the needs of our citizens, City department heads are watching costs along the way. For example, our employees have conformed to a new cell phone policy that will save the City thirteen thousand dollars in the first year. We are also looking to cut our health care costs by giving employees several options with cost savings and incentives to be more frugal about utilization.

We are also very committed to the attraction of new business to our community, as well as the future needs of our current industrial and commercial partners. The annexation of 110 acres west of Ivy Tech will be the catalyst to create new or expanded industrial opportunities. We will partner to develop those “cornfields” into sites that are competitive and attractive to future employers.

Landowners and municipal and private partners will collaborate and share responsibility for extending utilities and roadways. Industrial and commercial developers will plan and design attractive sites. Local, regional, and state economic development leaders will market these opportunities. Existing companies and public/private community resources may also partner for success. All of these collaborations are necessary to sustain, grow, and diversify the assets we have been blessed with. Nobody can do it alone.

Our entire Council is also involved in a downtown parking study. If the number of parking survey participants and constructive discussion at the first meeting are any measure of public interest, I am confident our solution will be satisfactory as a result of those citizens who participated and gave of their time to

engage. Our elected officials can't do it alone.

Enjoy the downtown this summer with First Fridays, the Saturday morning Farmers Market, our FREE weekly Friday night music in Central Park (don't miss Grand Funk Railroad on June 15<sup>th</sup> at the Glover Pavilion), and the Lakes Festival next weekend at Center Lake. Or just come downtown for an ice cream cone or a good meal. Our merchants can't do it alone.