

February 2016

## City Notes

### Job Opportunities

The City's Public Works Department seeks college students interested in becoming temporary seasonal workers this summer. The position is responsible for a wide variety of maintenance and custodial duties, and work is generally performed outdoors. Applicants must be at least 18 years old. Read more and find out how to apply [on the City's website](#).

The City's Engineering Department seeks applicants for a summer internship position. The position is responsible for assisting the Engineering Department in various projects. Applicants must be currently enrolled in a civil engineering curriculum or related course work. For more information and to find out how to apply, [see the City's website](#).

### New Online Water/Sewer Billing

The City's new online water/sewer billing system, Wheaton Online Bill Pay, has replaced ePay. To pay your bill online, visit [www.wheaton.il.us/billpay](http://www.wheaton.il.us/billpay). If you previously saved the link to the ePay billing site, this will no

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## Contact the City

**Police/Fire: 911**

**After-Hours Water/Sewer Emergency: 630-260-2161**

**General Information: 630-260-2000, 630-260-8090 (TDD)**

**City Hall Hours: 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Friday**

# Mayor Delivers Annual State of the City Address

Each January, Wheaton's mayor reflects on the past year and looks toward the future in the annual State of the City Address. Mayor Michael Gresk presented his ninth State of the City Address on Jan. 21 during the Wheaton Chamber of Commerce's monthly luncheon.

Mayor Gresk touted some of the significant gains in economic development and recent building activity as evidence of the economy picking up in Wheaton:

- Morningside Group recently sold the Wheaton 121 luxury apartment community to Invesco for a sizeable profit, demonstrating Wheaton's strong buying power.

- After a long delay caused by the economic recession, the Courthouse Square development is back on track, with construction of 153 apartments under way.

- Wheaton Center is nearing completion of a \$30 million rehabilitation project.

- Wheaton College re-



**The Courthouse Square development is back on track with construction of 153 apartments under way. It is one of many signs that the economy is picking up in Wheaton.**



### Watch the Video

You can [watch the Mayor's presentation on the City's website](#). Wheaton Comcast subscribers can also watch the presentation at 5 p.m. and 10 p.m. Thursdays and Saturdays on [City of Wheaton Channel 10](#) (CWC10).

cently constructed several new dormitories.

Three new single-family

home developments under construction also serve as a positive sign of growth that the City hasn't experienced in years:

- 11 new single-family homes are planned for the Northwoods of Wheaton development near Wheaton North High School

- 18 new homes are planned for the Woodlawn Place development on Gary Avenue

- 12 new homes are

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### Feedback:

Please mail your comments to:

Mayor's Office, 303 W. Wesley St., Wheaton, IL 60187

Or, email comments to: [feedback@wheaton.il.us](mailto:feedback@wheaton.il.us)

Continued from page 1

longer work.

You can [read more about the switch to the new system on the City's website.](#)

## Holiday Light Recycling

Bring strands of incandescent or LED lights and extension cords in any condition to the Public Works Storage Facility at 820 W. Liberty Drive any time between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. weekdays. Look for signs directing you to the holiday light recycling area just inside the gate on the south side of Liberty Drive. The Public Works Department will accept lights for recycling through Feb. 12.

[Elgin Recycling](#) will collect the lights, which will then be stripped and recycled for their copper and plastic parts. No materials will be shipped overseas.

## Take DuPage County Workforce Survey

Choose DuPage, an organization that promotes economic development in DuPage County, invites residents to take part in a DuPage County Workforce Survey. Through the survey, the organization seeks to achieve a better understanding of the needs and desires of the current workforce – including ideal workplace environments, amenities, transportation and more.

To take the survey, visit [www.surveymonkey.com/r/ChooseDuPage](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ChooseDuPage).



Whole Foods will be moving into a 55,000-square-foot space in the location of the former Dominick's store in Danada Square East.

## State of City

Continued from page 1

planned for the Northridge Estates development near Gary Avenue and Jewell Road.

The City annexed all of these developments to the City, which increases Wheaton's tax base.

Elsewhere, homeowners and businesses are investing in the community with renovations and improvements. The City issued 7 percent more building permits in 2015 than the previous year, and 42 new single-family homes were constructed in 2015.

## Business Activity

Whole Foods recently committed to a larger retail space in the Danada Square East location of the former Dominick's store. Whole Foods will be moving from its

39,000-square-foot store into a 55,000-square-foot space in late 2016 or early 2017. As Danada Square East's new anchor, the City expects that Whole Foods will attract other businesses to the shopping center.

Also, Tucker Development purchased the Town Square shopping center and announced a significant investment it will bring to the center.

Another area with plans for improvement is the downtown. The City has been

working for several years toward improving the downtown area with a strategic plan that focuses on elements like the streetscape, infrastructure, signage and gathering areas for events.

In 2015, the City enlisted Design Workshop to create specific designs for elements of the plan. The first phase will include designs for a park concept along Liberty Drive, a French Market structure and improvements to Liberty Street consistent with a festival street idea. Design Workshop will soon have public meetings to review design ideas. See more on page 6.

## City Finances

Despite uncertain times in Illinois, Wheaton remains on solid financial ground. The City has maintained Moody's AAA bond rating – the high-

**Wheaton could lose more than \$2.6 million per year if state legislation cuts in half the amount of Local Government Distributive Fund money cities receive.**

est level awarded to municipalities – since 2010. This rating reflects the City's credit worthiness and is an outside appraisal of Wheaton's financial status.

The City continues to monitor monthly expenditures and revenues to ensure that the City has sufficient reserve funds in place. Part of the reason the City maintains these reserves is to respond to factors beyond the City's control, such as decisions made by the State of Illinois.

The Governor announced

his intention to reduce the amount of Local Government Distributive Fund (LGDF) money that municipalities receive. Wheaton could stand to lose more than \$2.6 million per year if legislation cuts this amount in half. This amounts to the same as:

- 65% of the City's capital projects budget, or
- 75% of the General Fund's Public Works personnel costs, or
- 44% of the Fire Department's personnel costs, or
- 23% of the Police Department's personnel costs.

More recently, the Governor's budget director suggested eliminating all of the Local Government Distributive Fund money. This would represent 13% of all General Fund revenue, about \$5.2 million each year.

The state also has proposed freezing municipal property tax rates for at least two years, which would freeze 31% of the City's General Fund revenue at 2015 levy year levels. Additionally, other sources of revenue for the City are trending relatively flat. If a property tax freeze is enacted and all or a portion of LGDF is taken by the State for their own use, the City will be severely limited in its options for dealing with the lost or frozen revenue sources.

For these reasons, this year City Council decided to increase the property tax levy for the first time since 2009. The Council saw a modest

*(Continued on next page)*

# State of City

Continued from page 2

increase as a necessary response.

With this levy, a property assessed at \$350,000 could see an increase of about \$48 in the City's portion of their tax bill. However, the City has the ability to abate the increase in March if it is not needed.

## Leadership Changes

The past year also saw several leadership changes.

In November, Wheaton Police Chief Mark Field retired after 24 years of service to the City. He led a well-qualified department dedicated to providing excellent service to the Wheaton community.

New Police Chief James Volpe has a wealth of experience within the Wheaton Police Department. Chief Volpe began working for the City as a patrol officer in 1983, and rose to become Shift Commander, Watch Commander and Division Commander of Investigations.

Another change is the upcoming retirement of City Manager Donald Rose, who began as Assistant to the City Manager in 1974 and became Wheaton's City Manager in 1980. Mr. Rose has worked for 6 mayors and 33 different City Council Members.

Mr. Rose led the City through defining times, from



**New Police Chief James Volpe (left) and former Police Chief Mark Field (right)**

the development of the Danna area and significant downtown developments, to a population growth of more than 20,000 residents. He led efforts to improve the city's infrastructure, and he guided the City through some difficult times during the economic recession. He leaves the City on excellent footing, with a financial status that puts Wheaton in an elite class of municipalities.

Assistant City Manager Michael Dzogan will begin as City Manager on May 1. He has served as Wheaton's Assistant City Manager for the past 24 years and is well qualified to step into the role of City Manager. He has led the City's development group and many City initiatives, such as implementing the City's strategic goals into City operations.

The City Council also saw changes. Following Evelyn Sanguinetti's resignation from

the City Council to become Illinois Lieutenant Governor, the City Council appointed former City Councilwoman Liz Corry to fill in until the April 2015 municipal election. Voters then selected Suzanne Fitch, a former Wheaton Planning & Zoning Board member, as one of the At-Large City Council representatives.

## Infrastructure Projects

The City has been working to reduce the amount of stormwater that can seep into sanitary sewer pipes, which can cause backups and overflows. Because the City has largely addressed problems within the publicly owned portion of the sanitary sewer system, it is now working in the second of two pilot areas to test the effectiveness of lining sanitary sewer laterals.

To address flooding concerns, the City hired an engineering firm to further study the Briarcliffe Lakes area. A previous study suggested connecting Lake 4 to the Windsor drainage channel with a storm sewer pipe, so engineers will now be looking to see what kind of effect this would have downstream.

Crews continued working on a citywide sidewalk replacement program. This project identified all of the sidewalk squares throughout the City that met the City's



**Donald Rose**



**Michael Dzogan**

definition for being "highly defective." The 2016 program will address the area east and south of Wiesbrook Road, south of Farnham and west of Naperville Road. Once this year's program is complete, crews will have replaced all of the "highly defective" squares originally identified throughout the entire city.

The first round of new LED streetlights – selected by popular vote – made their debut in the Briarcliffe neighborhood. The City previously installed sample LED lights in that neighborhood and asked all residents to vote on their preferred light fixture. Crews installed the first 278 fixtures of the winning choice and will install more than 300 in the next fiscal year.

This year the Public Works Street Division continued taking on more paving repairs due to new paving equipment and training. This enables the City to be able to do more patching and local spot repairs. In addition, the annual road program improved 4.1 miles of roads in Wheaton.

The Public Works Forestry Division continued dealing with the effects of the emerald ash borer. Following the loss and removal of 6,500 parkway ash trees, the City is funding a program to replace these trees in all locations suitable for replanting through 2020.

The City is partway through a multi-year program to replace all water meters in the city. City employees have replaced more than 3,500 water meters, with just under 13,000 left to be replaced.

## Technology

One of the major projects that the City continues to implement is a city-wide software system that is streamlining many of the City's operations by integrating them.

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# Take Survey to Help Guide Wheaton's Next Garbage/Recycling Service Contract



*Survey open through February 29*

**H**ow would you rate Wheaton's current garbage and recycling service? Would you rather pay a monthly fee or continue using garbage/yard waste stickers? Would you like to use a garbage cart similar to the blue recycling carts? These are just a few of the topics on which you can share your opinion and help decide the future of Wheaton's curb-side program.

Please take a minute to complete the survey about garbage, recycling and yard waste collection at [www.surveymonkey.com/r/WheatonGarbageSurvey](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WheatonGarbageSurvey). Residents who do not have access to the internet can complete a paper copy of the survey at City Hall. Your feedback will influence the level and type of services you receive; how the program's costs are structured; and how you pay for garbage/

## Garbage/Recycling Collection Survey

Take the survey online at [www.surveymonkey.com/r/WheatonGarbageSurvey](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WheatonGarbageSurvey)

recycling service.

The deadline to complete this survey is Feb. 29. Printed surveys are available by request by calling 630-260-2019 or sending an email to [communications@wheaton.il.us](mailto:communications@wheaton.il.us).

## State of City

**Continued from page 3**

This includes a recent change to a new online water/sewer billing system, which is part of the coordinated approach to make the City's processes more efficient. In the future, you will be able to pay for permits, parking tickets or city invoices online, as well as pay parking tickets.

The City also is working to redesign the City website.

## Wheaton Public Library

Among the biggest changes happening at the Wheaton Public Library is the upcoming opening of a library café, called Café on the Park. The library plans for it to open early this year.

The library's website also received a facelift. Check out the new streamlined website at [www.wheatonlibrary.org](http://www.wheatonlibrary.org).

Some other exciting things happening at the library in the past year include a new ongoing used book



**This illustration shows what the Wheaton Public Library's new Café on the Park will look like.**

sale in the Friends of the Library Book Nook, the creation of a gallery wall for local art and photography, and an early childhood learning center.

## Programs Benefitting the Environment

In terms of programs benefitting the environment,

- The City completed its second annual pumpkin composting program. Residents dropped off 4.72 tons of

pumpkins in just three hours.

- The City's monthly electronic recycling collections have grown in the past year to also collect scrap metal, cooking oil and household batteries, in addition to most types of electronics and fluorescent tube light bulbs.

## Community Partners

Mayor Gresk closed by pointing to the many ways volunteers, organizations and

others make a noticeable difference in Wheaton, such as the more than 100 residents who volunteer their time on 17 boards and commissions, the Wheaton Chamber of Commerce, Community Unit School District 200, Wheaton Park District and Downtown Wheaton Association. He thanked residents, businesses and organizations for their contributions, which make this a spectacular community.

# Discourage Coyotes from Your Property

While coyotes are valuable in decreasing the rodent population, their presence in populated areas can be minimized by removing things that attract them to places they are not wanted. Coyotes can become a nuisance when they have easy access to food in residential areas, such as pet food or garbage.

NEVER feed a coyote.

Take steps to ensure that you are not providing them with a source of food, either intentionally or unintentionally:

- Feed pets indoors or promptly remove dishes

when pets complete their meal outside. Store bags of pet food indoors.

- Clear brush and dense weeds from around property to deprive rodents of shelter and reduce protective cover for coyotes.
- Use trash barrels equipped with tight clamping devices on the lids.
- DO NOT feed or provide water for coyotes or other wildlife. This practice abnormally attracts coyotes and promotes increased numbers of rodents, birds and other creatures that can provide major portions of the coyote's natural diet.



## Upcoming Events

### Winter (Indoor) French Market

**Dates:** Saturdays through March 26, 2016

**Times:** 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

**Location:** Downtown Wheaton train station, [402 W. Front St.](http://402 W. Front St.)

The Wheaton French Market is indoors for the winter. Find many of the same vendors with specialty foods, baked goods, home decor, gifts and more.

### Bullying Prevention

**Date:** Wednesday, Feb. 3

**Time:** 7 p.m.

**Location:** Wheaton Public Library, [225 N. Cross St.](http://225 N. Cross St.)

Parents will learn warning signs, talking points, and practical application skills to use if their child is being bullied. Children learn how to identify bullies or predators and participate in a short hands-on

self-defense course. Register at [wheatonlibrary.org/calendar](http://wheatonlibrary.org/calendar) or call 630-868-7520.

### The Truth about Guantanamo Bay

**Date:** Thursday, Feb. 11

**Time:** 7 p.m.

**Location:** Wheaton Public Library, [225 N. Cross St.](http://225 N. Cross St.)

From misinformation to disinformation, what's really going on? Presented by former Guantanamo Bay interrogator and Wheaton author Eric Wentz. Register at [wheatonlibrary.org/calendar](http://wheatonlibrary.org/calendar) or call 630-868-7520.

### Electronic Recycling

**Date:** Saturday, Feb. 13

**Time:** 9 a.m.-noon

**Location:** Public Works Storage Yard, [820 W. Liberty Drive](http://820 W. Liberty Drive) (just east of the Police Station)

Bring unwanted electronics, including nearly anything with a cord, to the monthly

electronic recycling collection. Please note: These collections are currently unable to accept CRT (large tube) televisions, projection-screen televisions and console televisions.

Also accepted are scrap metal, household batteries, cooking oil and fluorescent tube bulbs. More information

### Two-Part Vocational Workshop

**Date:** Thursdays, Feb. 18 & 25

**Time:** 7 p.m.

**Location:** Wheaton Public Library, [225 N. Cross St.](http://225 N. Cross St.)

Join certified life coach Laurie Swanson for this two-part workshop that explores your current job, career, or vocation. The first part will look at your current job, and the second part will teach you steps you can take to change your job or career. Register at [www.wheatonlibrary.org/calendar](http://wheatonlibrary.org/calendar) or call 630-868-7520.

### Sunday Concert: Zazz

**Date:** Sunday, Feb. 21

**Time:** 2 p.m.

**Location:** Wheaton Public Library, [225 N. Cross St.](http://225 N. Cross St.)

This five-piece jazz combo features a unique sound that combines jazz standards, less often heard jazz tunes and original compositions. Pick up free tickets at the Checkout Desk or call 630-868-7510.

### In Good Taste Restaurant Week

**Dates:** Feb. 26-March 6

**Location:** Participating downtown Wheaton restaurants

Watch for Restaurant Week specials at downtown restaurants. This week is dedicated to appreciating the many dining options in downtown Wheaton. For information, [see the Downtown Wheaton Association's website](http://the Downtown Wheaton Association's website).

# Take Cross Connection Control Survey

Along with your February water bill from the City, you will find a Cross Connection Control Survey. If you have a lawn irrigation system, a fire sprinkler system, swimming pool, boiler or other item directly connected to the City's water system that requires a backflow prevention device, this survey applies to you. You can take the survey included with your water bill or take the online version at [www.wheaton.il.us/ccsurvey](http://www.wheaton.il.us/ccsurvey).

Cross connections within the public water system are a serious concern, as they can allow contaminants or pollutants to enter the public water system through backflow. Every two years, the Water Division is required by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) to conduct a survey to determine where cross connections exist. This survey is an important component of the IEPA and the City's Cross Connection Control Program. The information obtained is used to ensure safe drinking water for all users by documenting whether a building has certain devices, such as a lawn irrigation system, or whether a backflow prevention device is currently installed.

If you have any questions regarding this program, please contact the City of Wheaton's Water Division at 630-260-2886.



## Help Pick Designs for Downtown Improvements at March 2 Meeting

The City has contracted with Design Workshop, a landscape architecture firm, to assist the City with the first phase of implementing elements of the Downtown Strategic Plan.

This plan will focus on streetscape improvements, gathering areas, signage and other changes to enhance downtown Wheaton.

The City seeks your opinion in helping guide the designs for these plans. Design Workshop will hold a public meeting at 7 p.m. Wednesday, March 2 at Wheaton City Hall, 303 W. Wesley St.

Look for information on the City's website or subscribe to the Wheaton Weekly email updates at [www.wheaton.il.us/emailupdates](http://www.wheaton.il.us/emailupdates).

### Downtown Plan Public Meeting

- **Date:** Wednesday, March 2
- **Time:** 7 p.m.
- **Location:** City Hall, 303 W. Wesley St., Council Chambers

## Senior Housing Assistance Program Applications Are Due by Feb. 26

Since 1972, the City of Wheaton has administered a Housing Assistance Program to assist its senior citizens with their housing costs. The City's Housing Commission is tasked with managing this program.

Residents must meet the three following requirements in order to qualify for

the Wheaton Housing Assistance Program:

• **Age:** The minimum age for acceptance into this program is 65 years old.

• **Residency:** The minimum length of Wheaton residency for acceptance into this program is 3 years.

• **Income:** The maximum annual household income for acceptance into this pro-

gram is \$23,500.

Senior Housing Assistance applications are available at City Hall and [on the City's website](http://on the City's website). Applications are due by Friday, Feb. 26. To inquire about the program, please contact Lindsay Qualkenbush at the City of Wheaton at 630-260-2019 or at [LQualkenbush@wheaton.il.us](mailto:LQualkenbush@wheaton.il.us).



## City Calendar

City Council Meetings and Planning Sessions are held in the Council Chambers at Wheaton City Hall, 303 W. Wesley St. Coffee with Council takes place in the Gamon Room at City Hall. Visit [www.wheaton.il.us](http://www.wheaton.il.us) for a complete list of meetings and events.

### February 2016

- 1 City Council Meeting, 7 p.m.
- 6 Coffee with Council, 10 a.m.
- 8 City Council Planning Session, 7 p.m.
- 15 City Offices Closed
- 16 City Council Meeting, 7 p.m.
- 22 City Council Planning Session, 7 p.m.