

Thanks for joining me. We have some exciting news to report, so let's get started.

Our Willowcreek Road project is off and running. A lot will be happening over the next several weeks. Again, please be patient and use extreme caution. Sidewalks, curb work and intersections will get the first attention, then paving will be next, so stay tuned.

Last week, I met with our IT supplier. I told their team that we want the most efficient, most secure and most user-friendly IT system in the Region at the best cost to our tax payers. I will work hard to negotiate the best for our City.

Last week, I asked for a meeting with our park board president and the skateboarding community. I learned that the skateboarding community of Portage and surrounding communities are motivated folks. I welcome suggestions and ideas. When we have a Skateboard Park, it will be an added amenity to our great City. I am moving forward with talks in the upcoming weeks; I will be putting together a meeting with our Parks Foundation, Portage Township, Portage Township Schools and our Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Northwest Indiana.

I am happy to report that our Comprehensive Sidewalk Plan Phase One is in place and results are finally happening. Our plan, Phase One, will connect sidewalks that just end; this practice of not finishing sidewalks throughout our City will stop as it is just unacceptable to this administration.

Speaking of this administration's efforts to be transparent and upfront with you, the appointed bi-partisan investigative committee looking into allegations of wrong-doing in the Clerk-Treasurer's office has completed its job. I want to thank the 3 members for their service that they provided in a Bi-partisan way to our City. They have supplied me with 9 recommendations to prevent their findings from occurring in the future and put an end to the mistrust of the Clerk's office. I will be presenting the recommendation to the City Council in early August.

There's great news about something that I am very passionate about, our Lakefront Beach at our Lakefront Park and River walk. I will meet this week with a New York Times reporter that I have invited to check out our beach erosion issue. We will see what happens. More info that gets out, the more that might happen to correct the issues.

I will be expecting the Crime stats for the first 6 months of 2019 this week. I am sure the stats will be great; our PD is the best in the area, and I know they are doing their best. I have even more respect for our officers than I have ever had! Job well done, PPD.

This week is county fair week; I will be in attendance many days, and I hope I can visit with you. I will be attending the Honored Senior Event at the Fair on Wednesday. I am always honored to attend an event for seniors, and our seniors are the connections to our past and our teachers for our future.

Our First Responders are working on a joint effort to train and organize a Rescue Team for our City. In this effort, if an emergency event occurred in our City, as a result we will be ready to save lives.

Friends, I have some news to report. Our Economic Development Director, Andy Maletta, has decided to take another career path. Andy has served his City well. I want to congratulate Andy on his next adventure, and I wish him well; he will always have a friend in this Mayor. Thank you, Sir, for your service and love of our City.

Wrapping up for today, every man, woman or child I have met or heard from in this job wants one thing more than anything in the whole wide world, that's tomorrow; and if we think it over, that's one thing we all have in common. And I believe this, that if tomorrow we all woke up and said this is my City and I am going to do good for it, we will make the best foot forward since our City was born 51 years ago. Heck, it might do us all some good. God bless you, and see you soon.