



Village of Lombard

State of the Village 2016: Behind the Scenes

Good afternoon and welcome to the 2016 Annual State of the Village address.

I'm Village President Keith Giagnorio and I'm proud to be here today to tell you that the State of the Village is Strong. Lombard has come a long way since my first State of the Village address in 2014. But it's not where you've been, it's where you're going.

To get where we are today, it really does "take a Village", and I certainly don't work alone. Our Village Board of Trustees includes Mike Fugiel, Reid Foltyniewicz, Bill Johnston, Robyn Pike and Bill Ware and Dan Whittington.

I know I speak for our Board when I say that our accomplishments would never have a shot at becoming a reality without the hard work of the 279 members of our Village staff, who by the way, are some of the most dedicated and committed professionals that I have met.

I mentioned earlier how far we have come as an organization over these past few years. As a Board we have tackled some pretty difficult issues, managed to disagree without being disagreeable, and even gotten through a few Board meetings in under half an hour. So this year, rather than go through our highlights department by department, I wanted to change things up a bit and shed some light on **HOW** it is we do what we do. We want to give you a peek behind the curtain and give you a behind the scenes tour of **HOW** we work together to achieve our common goals effectively with our Committee structure.

The Village currently has more than 80 community residents currently serving on our 6 standing advisory committees. Our committees are made up of qualified residents who volunteer their time and expertise. Each committee is chaired by a Village Trustee and functionally linked to a

Village department and a staff liaison. These advisory committees take on projects and initiatives, to develop educated and thoughtful recommendations to the Village Board on policies, directions, and programs.

Those short Board meetings I mentioned? They're not short because there is nothing going on. We're busier than ever. It's because our committees have vetted the issues and have done some of the initial heavy lifting for the Board. If you want to see true Democracy in action in the Village of Lombard, go to one of our Committee meetings.

Our first committee is the Community Relations Committee, chaired by Trustee Robin Pike. Just as it sounds, this committee focuses on our relationships as a Village with the public. In addition to working on certain community services and programs, this committee is tasked with overseeing our public communication efforts. We are an organization that values openness and transparency.

This past year, the Community Relations Committee recommended and the Village Board approved a new communications policy. The policy provides structure for the Village's communications efforts. You may have noticed the Village's new approach towards responding to anonymous comments in the Speak Out section of the Lombardian. Where we previously offered no formal response to published questions or concerns, we now work with the Lombardian Editor Bonnie Mackay each week to publish official replies. This policy allows the Village to respond to resident concerns and demonstrates our commitment to communications and transparency.

We continued to see major growth in our Social Media last year, including Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram. These platforms allow us to share news as its happening. Our

Facebook likes and Twitter followers have doubled in the past year and we're now using new technology like Periscope, to broadcast live feeds.

For those of us who don't tweet or Periscope, the Village sends out a weekly e-newsletter with important updates and events directly via e-mail. If you aren't already signed up with us, please be sure to visit www.villageoflombard.org/notifyme to sign up.

Trustee Mike Fugiel and the Community Promotion and Tourism Committee oversee the hotel/motel tax budget and the funding and support for special events that encourage local tourism. This committee is really our unofficial event planning committee, focused on making Lombard an overall great place to visit.

In 2015, the Committee approved 8 grants for events like the Lilac Parade, the Lilac Time Art & Craft Fair, Spooktacular, Jingle Bell Jubilee for a total of more than \$60,000 in awards through the Local Tourism Grant Program. When you add in the costs of Village services and the costs for events that we run ourselves like Cruise Nights and Summer Concerts as well as the Fourth of July Fireworks, the total committee funding for events in 2015 was over \$174,000.

Funding for these events comes from hotel taxes paid by visitors to our community and is a reinvestment that comes back to us in the form of additional hotel stays, food, beverage, and other local sales. In fact, this year, Mike and his Committee are working on a program to incentivize large group bookings to stay in Lombard hotels. I understand that we've already had initial interest from a group to book an event that would generate more than 900 room nights.

Not everyone realizes the direct impact tourism has on our Village. In 2014, tourists to DuPage County generated \$2.4 billion dollars and produced more than \$40 million in local tax receipts

for DuPage communities. This adds up to approximately \$1,300 of annual taxes that the average DuPage County family does not have to pay.

When it comes to special events within this Village, I want to take a moment to discuss the work of a related committee that was created this past year to develop recommendations for our Board specifically concerning community events and festivals: the Lombard Pride Committee. This ad hoc committee researched neighboring community festivals and issued an RFP seeking proposals from local non-for-profit groups to run a new event within the community. While no group has stepped forward to submit a formal proposal yet, the Village Board has accepted the committee's recommendations including:

- 1) That the Village continue to host a Fourth of July fireworks display,
- 2) That the Village will continue to plan, support and fund year-round special events, including Cruise Nights and Summer Concerts, Jinglebell Jubilee, Spooktacular, and Lilac Time events,
- 3) That the Village will keep the door open for new proposals when groups are ready to host or propose new events; and,
- 4) That the Village will continue its commitment to communicate on these issues with the public and local not-for-profit organizations.

We look forward to another year of wonderful special events and the possibility of receiving ideas for new and creative community festivals.

That brings us to our next committee.

Trustee Dan Whittington serves as the Chairperson of our Public Safety and Transportation Committee, which is responsible for overseeing public safety matters within the Village.

Community safety really is our highest priority and public protection is an essential core service of local government.

Our police and fire departments are here for you because unfortunately sometimes...things do go wrong, and we have the numbers to prove it. In 2015, the Lombard Police Department received and responded to more than 17,000 calls to 9-1-1.

I know that recently we've all heard negative news about police departments around the country and closer to home. Some Police Officers in nearby Chicago and Fox Lake have cast dark shadows on the rest of the men and women who serve their communities with honor and with integrity. But that's not us.

The Village of Lombard Police Department is CALEA accredited. Agencies that choose to be accredited by CALEA must demonstrate that they are willing to comply with standards that exemplify the best practices in policing and law enforcement. To put it into perspective, out of a total of 701 local police departments, Lombard is only 1 of 44 in the State to achieve this accreditation.

One of the CALEA standards is excellence in transparency and accountability. The Lombard Police Department ensures this with annual examinations of current issues important to the public such as the use of force by officers and biased base policing. Audit systems are also in place to ensure responsible management of funds and confiscated evidence.

While we hope that Lombard will never have to be faced with an active shooter situation, we can find comfort in knowing that our officers have taken part in ALICE training, which provides them with the hands on experience needed for this type of emergency.

Our Police Department also participates in ongoing training pertaining to crisis intervention and how to respond to persons with mental illness. All personnel are trained on how to best handle these situations and we have specialized Crisis Intervention Teams.

Just like our Police Department, our Fire Department is continually forging positive relationships within our community. Our Fire Department is an extremely busy one responding to more than 6,000 calls in 2015.

The Lombard Fire Department also hosted several community events this past year. Their recent Toy Drive and Toy Parade helped raise over \$3,000 of cash donations, and more than \$10,000 worth of toys and useful goods for Lombard organizations. Last year our Fire Department also presented a check for more than \$2,000 from funds raised through their pink t-shirt campaign, to Advocate Good Samaritan Hospital's Cancer Care Center to purchase wigs for women in treatment.

We can't say enough about our Police and Fire Departments. If something ever goes wrong at my home, I'm glad to know the men and women who will be there if I ever need them.

The Public Works and Environmental Concerns Committee, chaired by Trustee Bill Ware oversees infrastructure maintenance and improvements as well as matters concerning health and environmental quality within the Village.

While Public Works and infrastructure maintenance aren't always on the forefront of people's minds, they are the types of things that should not be taken for granted.

First off, I am happy to report that all of the Village's emerald ash borer infected trees have been removed. In total, more than 3,000 ash trees have been removed since 2009. These trees were weak and potentially unsafe. Removing them prevented fallen branches and potential harm to people or property.

Our Operations Division maintains 166 miles of Village roads, which by the way, is the same distance from here to Madison, Wisconsin. Our maintenance responsibilities include resurfacing, patching, crack-sealing, and of course, salting and plowing. One of the major accomplishments of 2015 involving our roads was the reconstruction of the Lombard Meadows and Lombard Circle neighborhoods.

2015 brought big changes to downtown Lombard. The Engineering Division oversaw the expansion of the Hammerschmidt Parking Lot, and we worked closely with the Union Pacific Railroad and Metra to complete the beautiful new commuter station and underpass tunnel, which provides safer passage and connects the north and south areas of downtown Lombard.

Looking ahead, the Village will soon begin a two year project to line the water mains along the Roosevelt Road corridor. To help make this project as painless as possible, we will be focused on providing business owners and residents with timely and useful information throughout the process.

Our Utilities Division maintains our water mains, sewers, and pumps 24/7. In 2015 they also completed the installation of 14 generators at various locations, which will be used to pump water and prevent flooding, even in times of electrical service failures. This makes Lombard a more resilient and storm-ready community. 2016 will bring a new pumping station at Route 53 and Phillips Court, and the beginning of stormwater related work around Gatz pond. These projects continue the Village's commitment to improving stormwater management in Lombard.

Public Works will oversee more than \$22 million of needed public improvements by the end of 2016. These projects have a long-term focus on infrastructure improvements and preventative maintenance, to protect our local infrastructure well into the future.

Trustee Johnston and the Economic and Community Development Committee, or “ECDC”, oversee all development and redevelopment matters within the Village.

Lombard continues to attract new businesses and investment. Last year, we issued over 2,500 permits which is our largest total in a decade. And these were not simple fence permits – these permits reflect private investment of over \$82 million dollars in property improvements in the community. Lombard welcomed 148 new or relocated businesses in a wide variety of commercial office and industrial spaces. Including international businesses from Sweden and Japan. And we have many more on the way.

The Village is continuing to facilitate business activity, including Keystone Properties redevelopment of former Landmark Restaurant site on Butterfield Road, as well as a new Dunkin Donuts adjacent to the AMC movie theatre.

We are also pleased to see continued growth in the residential market, with many more infill and subdivision opportunities forthcoming. New developments, like Park Place of Lombard and Highlands of Lombard demonstrate how the Village can work with the development community to advance innovative housing designs on long vacant and distressed sites.

Yorktown continues to bustle. Throughout 2015, Village officials worked diligently in partnership with Yorktown to develop a long-term plan for the northern portion of their site. The Yorktown Commons development will consist of a mix of residential and supporting commercial uses. This pro-active approach will help guarantee that our mall will remain a primary retail destination and will be developed in an innovative and exciting manner.

Downtown Lombard continues to thrive. Businesses including Marquette Kitchen & Tap, Shannon's Deli, Mesa Electronics, Mesa Home Video and Lorie's Jewelry have been able to renovate or build out, thanks in part to our various grant programs. We also must recognize property owners, such as Tom Smith and Clark Orthodontics, who undertook significant investments to rehabilitate long vacant spaces into thriving retail and office spaces. Their visions will bring about additions like Babcock's Grove Restaurant in the old Hotel, and Pioneer Daycare at the old Dog & Suds site.

The Village has a new Economic Incentive Policy to increase Lombard's desirability to new businesses. The Village continues to work closely with the Sam's Club on their final development plans. Construction will hopefully begin this summer on their brand new building on Butterfield Road and we anxiously await this project coming to fruition. This policy will be a tool the Village can use to attract new businesses at key properties including Kmart and Mr. Z's locations. In addition, we currently have several other incentive agreements under development and pending Village approval that should lead to enhanced economic development in 2016.

I am pleased to inform you that we have taken great strides in simplifying the process of doing business with the Village, by providing additional on-line permitting features and amending local building codes to simplify the development process. We've had a lot of great developments over the past year with more to come soon.

The Finance and Administration Committee is chaired by Trustee Reid Foltyniewicz. Reid and his committee have their work cut out for them as they volunteer their time to help face hard financial concerns. We have three things to talk about when it comes to the budget: The good, the bad, and the ugly.

The good news is that we all worked together to accomplish a fiscally sound budget for 2016. We held multiple budget workshops and had many long discussions about where money would be most responsibly allocated and our 2016 budget shows it. This year's budget is balanced, and we were able to keep our overall discretionary spending increases to less than 2%. But finding a balance means give and take. These decisions aren't easy, but they are necessary.

The bad news is that due to unfunded State mandates, our budget forecast for 2017 projects a 1.6 million dollar deficit. It's a big number, I know. But this is where our Finance Committee has already started reviewing all kinds of options and has begun taking a hard look at potential expenditure reductions, revenue increases, and service level modifications.

The truth is, that there's a lot of hard work ahead. But the important thing is that we're not ignoring it. We're choosing to be responsible and to proactively identify solutions, and we will. We are not a "kick the can down the road" kind of Board. We are working to solve our long range problems now because it's the right thing to do. It's the responsible thing to do.

And that brings us to the Ugly. The State of Illinois, who has started 2016 without a budget. As of now, municipalities are currently receiving their share of the State Income Tax, the LGDF, from which the Village of Lombard obtains approximately \$4.6 million annually. Governor Rauner had proposed cutting LGDF payments by half, and while this has not yet happened, this cut could amount for up to \$2.3 million of Village funds being diverted to the State of Illinois. Our Village Board and committees are keeping the State's troubles in mind while developing our long-range budget plan. We will continue to advocate for full funding of the LGDF and we will oppose any attempt by Springfield to claim monies slated for distribution to Lombard. At this point, everyone should stay tuned in on Springfield as we hope for the best, but prepare for the worst.

But you don't have to look to the State to see what a broken system looks like. In our own back yard, the College of DuPage Board has been popping up in the news a lot, and unfortunately, it's not for good reasons. Here in Lombard, we've worked hard for your vote of confidence and we will continue to work together to keep the Village running smoothly.

So what does all of this mean for you? What does this mean to the Chamber and to its members? In this state of unrest, in these chaotic times... **Lombard is solid**. Lombard offers **stability**. Lombard promises businesses that **we will work WITH them** to open their doors and do what we can to **keep them open**. Our Village Board gets things done. Our political stability makes us a good investment for new development, long term businesses, and expansions.

I can see some real themes with this Board: We are genuinely committed to working together. Part of that commitment is that everyone communicates proactively to eliminate surprises and insure that no one on the Board ever feels unprepared or forced into a making an uninformed decision. We treat each other with professional respect and personal courtesy because we know that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. **We talk to each other**.

We won't let the state of our Village be harmed by ignoring tough challenges. We're going to use the resources we have – our residents, our committees, and our collective commitment to come together and solve these issues. Facing our challenges strengthens our community. A community that we are honored to serve. And a community that we will do our best to protect and keep strong.

Our goals are clear. To recognize the issues ahead of us and to meet them head on, with team work, mutual respect, and a desire to achieve success. With your help, Lombard will continue to be the best place to raise our families, and enjoy our lives together.

Thank you for joining me to learn about the State of the Village. God bless you and may God Bless Lombard!