



City of Valparaiso, Indiana

# City Wins More than \$1.1 million in Grants for Safety

# CITY TALK

a City of Valparaiso Quarterly Newsletter

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**V**alparaiso has been awarded more than \$1.1 million in grant funds to enhance school safety and improve walking routes surrounding Valparaiso schools, thanks to the city's resourcefulness and strong partnerships with Valparaiso Community Schools. The grants include:

### Valpo Police Awarded \$640,000 Grant for School Security

The Valparaiso Police Department was awarded \$640,000 to promote safety within the Valparaiso Community Schools as part of the Secure Our School (SOS) program through the Department of Justice. Valparaiso's grant was one of the ten highest awards of the 167 awards given nationwide.

"We feel very fortunate during these challenging times to be able to go beyond maintaining, and continue to advance our services without increasing taxes," said Police Chief Mike Brickner. "Grants are very competitive, but we keep looking for funding and succeeding at securing grants and stimulus funds," he said.

The SOS grant will go toward school safety resources and programs designed to prevent school violence. The total grant included a match from Valparaiso Community Schools.

### Valparaiso Receives \$465,375 in INDOT Grants for School Routes

The City of Valparaiso has just received a \$210,375 grant from the Indiana Department of Transportation to improve the safety of walking routes near Memorial Elementary School. The project will include 4,125 feet of 5-foot-wide sidewalks, plus 24 handicapped ramps, four solar-powered radar driver feedback signs, and 10 bicycle racks – all designed to enhance safety and accessibility for students and residents who walk to school, parks, and surrounding areas. The entire project is funded by the grant, with no matching funds required.

"We're delighted this grant will enhance our pathways, enable more children to safely walk to their community school and give us more continuous pathways throughout the city," said Mayor Jon Costas. The Memorial grant brings the city's total to more than \$1.1 million in outside funding for improving school routes, adding more than 11,700 feet of pathways.



## Efficient Staffing

The city has maintained nearly the same number of full-time employees since 2001, even while adding 25 percent to the city through annexations and adding 12 paramedics to staff the city's own dedicated ambulance service.

2001 — 2010



229 Staff



232 Staff

129 Road Miles

145 Road Miles



10,500 Households



12,000 Households

**D**ear Citizens:

As we begin 2011, I'm also pleased to reflect on what 2010 brought to Valpo. Despite a challenging economy, your city is fiscally fit. We've managed to create a

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Rainy Day fund of more than \$3.5 million, we've attracted more than \$45.5 million in grants to invest in our city and we've held the line on adding staff. In fact, if you take out the paramedics we've added to staff our new dedicated ambulance service,



we actually have about 6 fewer employees today than a decade ago. This is all the more impressive when you consider that we've added 25% to the city through annexations. My hat is off to our talented (and resourceful) leadership team!

We're also excited to see that our investments continue to pay off in helping us to secure more grants and also to attract more private investment. Companies are choosing Valpo for new businesses and expansions. We hope to share more details in this new year.

I hope 2011 brings good things to you and your family. It's an honor to serve such a remarkable city.

All the best,

*Jon Costas*

Jon Costas  
Mayor

## Valpo Serving Seniors City leads nation in anticipating needs for aging population

One baby boomer turns 60 every seven seconds! Between 2002 and 2030, the older population will more than double nationwide. To meet the needs of Valparaiso's vital senior population, the city has formed a special partnership with Pines Village Retirement Communities, called ElderStyle. The partnership means that Pines Village manages the city's Village Park Enrichment Center at Banta in exchange for the Parks Department's services in maintaining grounds at Pines Village campuses.

"As we researched successful communities, we learned that Valparaiso's interest in planning for an aging community really is cutting edge," said Laurie Mullet, CEO of Pines Village Retirement Communities. "Few communities are embracing this as we are. We're looking at cities like San Jose, California as examples and other cities are watching us."



**Valparaiso is working to meet the needs of seniors, the fastest growing population in North America.**

The ElderStyle partnership is working as more than 500 seniors are involved in the city's Village Park Enrichment Center at Banta – socializing, exercising, learning, using the computer lab, and more. "I think it speaks well for Valparaiso that we have a center like this," said Jeannette Knowlton, a longtime Valparaiso resident. "I don't have family nearby and it's reassuring to have services available in Valparaiso. My sister lives in an elite area of Nevada and they don't have the same advantages," she said.

### ElderStyle going to the next level

Valpo's ElderStyle initiative is going to the next level this winter as a consultant will help the city to evaluate services and develop a Master Plan for serving seniors. The plan will address areas such as housing, health and wellness, transportation, legal assistance, and community engagement. The project will be funded through local grants.

"It makes good sense to embrace our senior population and plan ahead. As we boomers age our numbers will have the greatest impact on our community and our nation. With any luck, we'll all be seniors one day," said Mayor Jon Costas.

# Valparaiso Thinks Big...and Green

## Utilities Wins Sustainability Contest

The Valparaiso City Utilities Water and Water Reclamation Department was named the national winner of the 1st Annual Big Green Idea Contest, sponsored by municipal technology provider, Cartegraph.

The following examples of Valparaiso's creativity and efficiency won from entries all over the nation:

### TIME SAVINGS

Valpo knocked off about 1,000 working hours per year by maintaining work orders in Cartegraph. The efficiency translates into about \$35,000 in annual labor costs.

### RESOURCE SAVINGS

The computerized system also reduces the need for printed documents, saving more than 10,000 sheets of paper annually!

### DOLLAR SAVINGS

Efficiencies also helped develop schedules to extend the service life of fire hydrants, contributing to the city's improved fire suppression rating and insurance rates. This translates into a potential savings of 8 to 10% for property owners on their liability and property coverage premiums. "A business with a wood frame building valued at \$250,000 can save up to \$450 each year on an annual premium of approximately \$4,500," said Mike Anton of Anton Insurance.



Valparaiso's award-winning efficiency and fire suppression rating also add up to savings for property owners on insurance premiums.

"Overall, Valparaiso's submission demonstrated a long-term and practical commitment to sustainability in government. And that's what this contest was really about" said Natalie Sacco, Cartegraph Events/Communications Coordinator.

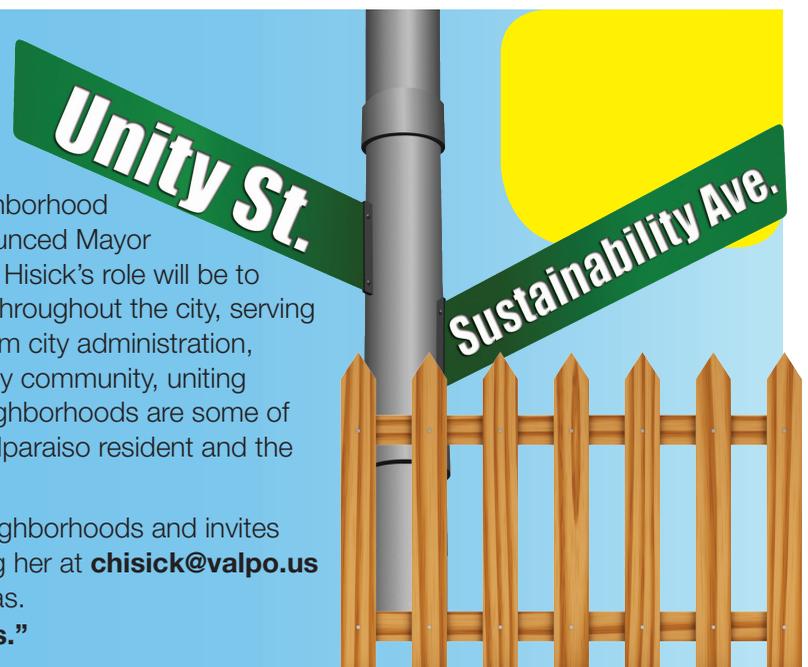
## Christine Hisick Named Neighborhood Liaison



Christine Hisick has been named Neighborhood Liaison for the City of Valparaiso, announced Mayor Jon Costas. As Neighborhood Liaison, Hisick's role will be to work with residents in neighborhoods throughout the city, serving as a communication conduit to and from city administration, and to be a problem solver. "Serving my community, uniting people, and promoting sustainable neighborhoods are some of my passions," said Hisick, a lifelong Valparaiso resident and the founder of Banta Feeds Food Drives.

Hisick is working to compile a directory of all Valparaiso neighborhoods and invites you to let her know about your neighborhood by contacting her at [chisick@valpo.us](mailto:chisick@valpo.us) or call her at City Hall, **219.462.1161** with questions or ideas.

She's also on facebook at "Valparaiso Neighborhoods."



# CITY TALK



City of  
**Valparaiso, Indiana**

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## City Installs First 'Green' Parking Lot

The City of Valparaiso has installed the city's first pervious concrete parking lot – located at Jefferson and Lafayette streets. "The lot's unique design and materials protect the environment by treating stormwater runoff and removing pollutants which can harm Lake Michigan and contributory streams," said Adam McAlpine, the city's chief deputy engineer. Because of the environmental aspects, the project was awarded a Save the Dunes grant, along with additional funding from the Redevelopment Commission.

The design includes a strip of pervious pavement along the middle of the parking lot and a bio-infiltration swale at the south end. In addition, a drainage structure helps water drain into the stone layers beneath, filtering sediments and pollutants and slowing the water before it reaches the city's combined sewer system.



Pervious concrete utilizes pea gravel, less water, and less sand than standard concrete to provide more void spaces for the passage of water through the concrete.

The unique pebbly composition gives pervious concrete a slightly different finish than standard concrete. "The finished surface resembles a rice crispy treat," said McAlpine. The city plans to paint a green stripe around the perimeter and place an educational sign near one end to inform people about pervious concrete and its benefits.



## Coming Soon: Central Park Plaza



Central Park Plaza is taking shape as the amphitheater and outdoor performance pavilion are nearly complete. The entire project will unfold in stages, including an interactive splash pad water feature at the center of the site, historic decorative lighting, interactive public art pieces, and a public restroom. The design has evolved through public input and will be funded through grants and private donations along with Major Moves funds from the city's share of the lease of the Indiana Toll Road.



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