



Creating Diversity. Creating Jobs.

The City of Valparaiso is also thinking globally when it comes to economic development. "Our location, resources and business climate make us an attractive location for business and we're communicating these benefits to companies worldwide," said Matt Murphy, the city's Economic Development Director.

The city was delighted to welcome Paul Wurth, Inc. to the city earlier this year. The Luxembourg-based company invested \$3.6 million to buy, renovate and equip their 55,000-square-foot facility at 2800 E. Evans Ave, bringing 14 new jobs. The company recently announced plans to create up to 40 additional jobs at its Valparaiso location within the next six years. "So many companies in our city are shipping worldwide, such as Task Force Tips, Urschel Laboratories, Emerson Power Transmission and many more. We're excited to welcome companies from anywhere in the world, and to help our existing companies expand and succeed," said Murphy.

Going Global

City and VU are advancing a world perspective

The world is shrinking as the city's global presence grows, due in part to partnerships between the city and Valparaiso University. "We're pleased to welcome students and businesses from all over the world to Valparaiso," said Mayor Jon Costas. "Together with Valparaiso University, we're reaching out to explore new markets, new cultures and new ideas."

Largest international enrollment ever

As the school year began this year, Valparaiso University welcomed its largest new undergraduate enrollment in 31 years and the largest international student enrollment in VU's history. "Welcoming a more diverse student body is very intentional on our part," said Mark Heckler, VU President. "Our interest in diversity is about expanding the whole scope of who is on campus and in the community, what they're learning, and what they're talking about. We want to prepare our students to be leaders in a global world," he said. The university is actively recruiting worldwide, visiting countries such as Saudi Arabia, Turkey, India and China on recruiting missions.

Not only are international students appearing in Valparaiso in growing numbers, but Valparaiso is also expanding its presence outside of Indiana through distance learning tools, said Heckler. A new Master of Business Administration program was recently introduced in which students can learn from anywhere in the world, using synchronous video, which connects students via a live picture around the globe. "Valpo is going to start popping up all over the country, and even all over the world," said Heckler.

Who's Teaching? Who's Learning?

Even American students are having more of an international experience these days, according to Renu Juneja, Senior Associate Provost for VU. "Our Engineers Without Borders group recently

returned from two weeks in Africa where they worked with wells and water purification. Our nursing students traveled to Korea. We have dozens of business students interning in China, plus exchange programs with India and Namibia," she said.

Through the Confucius Institute at Valparaiso University, high school students and businesses are expanding their learning. This summer the CIVU hosted its first Chinese Immersion Program for high school students from around the world as American, Mongolian and Pakistani students spent three weeks studying the Chinese language and culture. The students then returned to their own communities to share the knowledge.

"As we welcome global students and global learning, we find that we learn as much as the students," said Costas. The city recently sup-



ported a Diversity Summit on the VU campus, designed to create awareness of different cultures, encouraging students, faculty, and community to succeed together. "We want to foster an environment in Valparaiso where we all feel at home. I encourage each of us to represent Valparaiso by creating a community that welcomes diversity," said Costas.

Dear Citizens:

If April showers bring May flowers, October brings... leaves! We're delighted to have so many beautiful trees in our city and to be recognized for our efforts at urban forestry as a Tree City USA. Trees improve our environment, add value to our property, reduce our cooling costs and add to our quality of life. Learn more about our trees in this issue.

Visit www.valpo.us for City News, Announcements & Events

This fall issue also celebrates an international opportunity as we partner with Valparaiso University to welcome

one of the largest incoming classes at the university, including the highest concentration of international students ever. Becoming a global community is a shared priority and we're

delighted to add new faces and new global employers to our city.

We're working harder and smarter to create a community we're all proud to call home. The statewide circuit breaker is leading to funding challenges for so many communities. By working together and finding economies, our city has been able to maintain services and staffing, without considering the hard choices facing many other communities. We've even managed to create a reassuring rainy day fund.

To learn more about city services and events, visit us at www.valpo.us.

Sincerely,

Jon Costas

Jon Costas
Mayor



When it Comes to Water City is a Green Example

Valparaiso was recently complimented as a green example by the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) for efforts to manage stormwater. "We look to Valparaiso as a demonstrating community as far as what others can do," said Reggie Korthals, Senior Environmental Manager at IDEM. She was weighing in on Valparaiso's efforts to protect waterways by operating the city's

stormwater collection and conveyance system, called an MS4 system, which stands for Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System.

An MS4 program maintains water quality in creeks, streams, and waterways by reducing pollutants in stormwater runoff – pollutants such as sediment, oil and grease, salt, and other materials that may be carried to waterways. Under the leadership of Mingyan Zhou, the city's MS4 Operator, the city has completed extensive mapping, identifying receiving waters, MS4 conveyances, MS4 outfalls, industrial facilities, local restaurants, and septic systems within the city limits, working to reduce pollution that would compromise the waterways. A recent IDEM audit of the city's efforts received the highest score in all categories, including public education, mapping, field screening, developing and implementing a strategy and a plan to detect and eliminate illicit discharges to the MS4 conveyances.



The city has been recognized by IDEM for efforts to protect waterways. This parking lot at Jefferson and Lafayette streets is the city's first pervious concrete parking lot and was awarded a grant by Save the Dunes for its environmental consciousness. Pervious concrete provides more void spaces for the passage of water through the concrete. The lot was also designed with bio-filtration swales and a drainage structure that helps water drain into stone beneath the surface, filtering sediments and pollutants as it slows the flow of water to the city's sewer system.

What YOU can do to protect our waterways:

- Auto Care** – use commercial car wash facilities so the runoff doesn't go into the city's storm system, repair any leaks in your vehicle, dispose of used fluids and batteries at designated locations.
- Lawn Care** – use low-phosphorous or P-free fertilizer, keep yard waste and trash out of streets and gutters.
- Property Care** – keep stormwater "on site" using rain barrels, rain gardens, and permeable pavement.
- Never** pour anything down stormwater drains.
- Spread the word!** If you see a discharge that needs attention, contact Mingyan Zhou, 462-1161 or MS4@valpo.us.

Trick or Treat is Oct. 31

For both the city of Valparaiso and Porter County will be

Oct. 31 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm

Be especially careful of trick or treaters!

City-wide Food Drive

Valparaiso city employees will host their annual volunteer food **Oct. 26 to Nov. 3**. You may donate paper goods, toiletries, pet supplies and non-perishable foods at **City Hall daily 8:30 to 4:30** and contribute at Town & Country and the WiseWay store on Highway 30 on Nov. 3. Donated goods will be distributed to Valparaiso food pantries.

Doing More With Less



The City of Valparaiso has managed to do more with less over the past five years. The reduction in revenue was the result of the property tax caps or “circuit breaker,” which limits property taxes to a percentage of a property’s gross assessed value. The limit is 1% for residential units, 2% for commercial units; and 3% for industrial units. This means that the city can only expect to receive a percentage of the taxes levied, creating

budget shortfalls, which continue to grow.

Where municipalities used to be able to count on receiving nearly 100% of the annual tax levy, the circuit breaker means that cities see a shortfall each year. In 2011 the City of Valparaiso received just 88% of what was assessed to the city. In 2012, the city anticipates receiving just over 77%.

“Our departments have succeeded in under-spending each year,” said Clerk-Treasurer Sharon Swihart. “We’ve seen cities across

the country forced to reduce vital services, such as police and fire, due to budgets. I’m very pleased that we haven’t even considered layoffs, which would compromise services,” said Swihart. The city’s staffing levels have not increased in the last 10 years.

“We’ve been proactive, seeking out economies, working smarter and reinventing the way we serve,” said Mayor Jon Costas. “We’ve been able to do more than ever before while consistently under spending.”



To Rent a Bike Locker

Renters must agree to use the locker at least three times a week for a six-month period. The fee is \$25, plus a refundable deposit of \$40. Rental Applications are available at the parks offices on Campbell Street, at City Hall and online at www.valpoparks.org.

Pedal and Park

With nearly 12 miles of pathways and 10 new downtown bike lockers, Valparaiso is a city that encourages biking. Valparaiso is the first city in Northwest Indiana to introduce the bike lockers, which were funded by a grant from the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission.

The lockers have become public art displays, each highlighting a design from one of the city’s public elementary and middle schools.

The Redevelopment Commission funded the production costs for the artwork, along with a \$500 grant to each school.

Visual Valpo

An easy way to get a rapid response

The Visual Valpo program is working well, making us all “city inspectors” and giving us ways to easily report problems that compromise public safety or appearance, such as a light bulb out, pothole or graffiti. If you spot something amiss, Visual Valpo encourages you to report it in one of three easy ways:

- 1 Call the Visual Valpo line at 548-4850 and leave a message detailing the location and nature of the problem.
- 2 Text your message to 313131. Your initial message must say “visualvalpo” only. Text your issue after receiving the confirmation message.
- 3 Report online at www.valpo.us/requesttracker.aspx or clicking on the “Let us Know” tab on the city’s homepage, www.valpo.us.

In all cases, your message will be directed to the proper department for prompt attention. A free cell phone app for iPhone is also available (called “Citizen Request Tracker”), which provides a shortcut to the online request base.

3 WAYS TO REPORT IN:

- TEXT 313131 KEYWORD VISUALVALPO
- CALL (219) 548-4850
- WWW.VALPO.US/REQUESTTRACKER.ASPX

Tending Our Trees

For ten years running, Valparaiso has been named a Tree City USA for its commitment to urban forestry, a commitment that grows. “This city truly appreciates its environment and trees in particular,” said Mayor Jon Costas. “This year alone, the city will add about 250 trees to our urban forest.”

Emerald Ash Borer

Tree huggers braced for the unrelenting advance of the emerald ash borer, a shiny green insect with an appetite for ash trees. The city has been working proactively to remove nearly 600 ash trees in the city’s right of way—approximately 7 percent of the city’s street trees. Two grants from the Department of Natural Resources will provide \$30,500 to replace nearly 175 of these dying trees.

A Growing Opportunity

“As we replace these ash trees, we have an opportunity to choose a variety of hardy species and actually strengthen our urban forest,” said Matt Evans, Director of Public Works which oversees trees planted in the right of way – the area between the sidewalk and the street. The city reminds residents that trees planted in the right of way must adhere to the Unified Development Ordinance, which means they must be placed 25 feet apart and trees must be chosen from a list of approved species for parkways, selected for their appropriate size and hardiness. This

extensive list (20 different varieties!) is available at valpo.us/trees. “It’s also important to point out that these street trees may not be removed without first contacting the city,” said Evans.

How to Add to the Valparaiso Forest

Join the Shade Brigade

A volunteer movement is forming to assist the city by planting and caring for city trees, raising funds and applying for available grants. The first event will be a planting day on Saturday, Nov. 3. To get involved, call Public Works at 462-4612 or email aallen@valpo.us.

Contribute to the City’s Tree Fund

Each dollar you contribute to the city’s tree fund is matched by an additional \$7 in funds, through a combination of funds from an anonymous donor, the Valparaiso Redevelopment Commission and EDIT funds. So, by donating just \$1 a month, the Tree Fund receives \$96 a year—just about the replacement cost of one tree. You may contribute directly through your water bill each month. Sign up by visiting the Utilities Department at 205 Billings St. or complete the enrollment form by clicking on the “Partnering with the Community” link at www.valpo.us/trees.



Leave your Leaves

Notes about leaf pick-up

The city’s fleet of leaf trucks and vacuums will pick up leaves Oct. 15 through Nov. 30. Occasional Saturday pick ups may be added to the heaviest part of the season.

In Your Neighborhood

When it comes to leaves, remember:

- Generally, leaves will be picked up on the same day as trash.
- Crews will begin at 7:00 am and continue until dark.
- Leave your leaves in the right-of-way – off the street.
- Leaves should be the only thing in the pile.
- Additional items should be placed separately in the right-of-way—not in the street.
- Although it’s preferable to leave leaves unbagged during leaf pick-up season, leaves may be placed in biodegradable bags (NO plastic) or covered with a tarp at the curb to prevent them from blowing.
- Please bag any leaves prior to Oct. 15 and after the leaf pick-up season ends on Nov. 30.

For more information about leaf pick up, or other services of Public Works, visit the city’s web site at www.valpo.us/

