



City Of Jerseyville Sees Resurgence, More Capital Projects Planned

by Bob Manns
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JERSEYVILLE - The City of Jerseyville has had quite a resurgence that past couple of years, and more plans are in the works.

The City embarked on a capital improvement planning process in 2020, taking a comprehensive and systematic approach to long-term City-wide upgrades covering

downtown re-development, parks and recreation, infrastructure, and building improvements, just to name a few. At the same time, the City began applying for state /federal grant funding to help their local dollars go further, and those efforts have been successful.

Several large capital projects have been accomplished – new parking lots and event space for the downtown businesses and residents in multiple locations along with sidewalk/ADA ramp upgrades, pedestrian lighting, security cameras, and EV charging stations; rehab work at Donor Pool and the City Park pavilions and ball fields; the addition of the City’s first outdoor pickleball courts and fitness court at Lion’s Club Park, along with rehab of the basketball courts; roadway rehabilitation in several areas; and major stormwater piping and detention basin projects at Pleasant/Spruce, West County/Maple Summit, and the Cross/County region.

Mayor William Russell said “I take great pride in what the City has been able to accomplish the past few years, and our Council members working cooperatively to achieve our goals.” At its Council Workshop session on March 21, 2023, the City announced its next round of capital improvements for the next three years. The Susnig civic complex, now over 40 years serving the community, is ready to start construction utilizing \$550,000 in grant funding from IDNR and DCEO, as well as private donations, including a new gym flooring system, new ADA-compliant bleachers, retractable batting nets, new restroom facilities, replacement roof system, and other features. Commissioner Zach Crawford noted “this project will be a complete transformation of space, and will provide our youth and adults with many more years of enjoyment and use of the Susnig complex”.

Some other major projects are in the final planning stages – Hollow Avenue roadway reconstruction and sidewalk improvements, including \$1.5 million of combined federal /state grant funding; Pleasant Phase 2 drainage improvements which includes state grant funding; and IL Highway 109/Essex sidewalk improvements, which has a state grant pending for over \$900,000 to improve safety pedestrian and connectivity in the region of the middle school to the health department to the commercial complex.

Commissioner Nick Bexheti commented “our focus on infrastructure upgrades and safety improvements are key aspects of our capital improvement program. Safe streets and sidewalks are very important to the community.” In addition, the City has just obtained added funding for the next phase of its planned improvements at Lion’s Club /Wittman Parks, with the receipt of a \$600,000 competitive grant from IDNR, which coupled with a \$250,000 Illinois-American Water Company Charitable Foundation Grant and the City’s recent commitment of ARP funding, will enable the next phase of

improvements to become a reality. The project is planned to include a splash pad, bathhouse with open air pavilion, sand volleyball courts, outdoor ping-pong and cornhole, lighting and fencing, and related site improvements.

Commissioner Steve Pohlman said “the splash pad has been requested by numerous residents, and the community building will be utilized for tournaments at the park as well.” Other planned capital projects include new sidewalks and a high visibility crosswalk at Rotary Park, Hollow Avenue Phase 2 extending west to Waggoner Drive, Wock Lake walking path rehab, upgrades to City Hall, and a public works building.

Commissioner Kevin Stork has been the key architect for financing all of the projects, and explained “after assessing the needs of the community and collaborating with various stakeholders, we had to find creative ways to enable our limited City tax dollars to go much further as the costs of improvements continues to rise dramatically, and utilizing grant money has helped bridge the gap. We have received great feedback on our business-like approach, and we are witnessing an increase in economic development activity in Jerseyville from residents and visitors alike. We are proud of our community and what we have been able to accomplish as a group, even during these tough economic times.”



