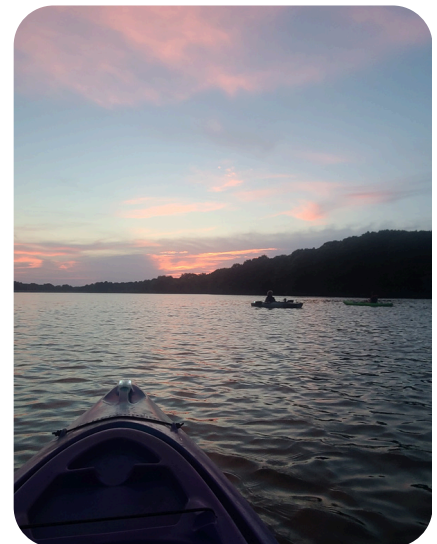




2024 ANNUAL REPORT



City of Galesburg

55 W. Tompkins Street
Galesburg, IL 61401
www.ci.galesburg.il.us

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Letter from the Mayor



**Peter
Schwartzman**

Mayor, City of Galesburg

Galesburg is growing stronger—because of you. In 2024, we put our squabbles of 2023 behind us and found common ground and crafted a shared vision.

We've made meaningful progress: revitalizing our downtown, improving infrastructure, and investing in public spaces that bring people together. We're creating opportunity—by supporting local businesses, expanding housing options, and preparing our workforce for a changing economy.

Our progress is rooted in community engagement and cooperation. The more we invest in people—through open dialogue, inclusive planning, and equitable growth—the more we thrive together.

Galesburg's heart lies in its people. Thank you for your partnership, your passion, and your belief in what we can build—together. As your mayor, I remain committed to ensuring every voice is heard and every resident feels a true sense of belonging in our city. The future is ours to shape, and we're just getting started.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Peter D. Schwartzman". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

Letter from the City Manager



**Eric
Hanson**

City Manager, City of Galesburg

As City Manager of Galesburg, it is a privilege to present this revitalized annual report, a testament to a year shaped by progress, purpose, and partnership. The achievements and statistics within these pages are a direct result of planning our work and working our plan – focusing on the top goals set forth by consensus of the City Council, diligently tracking our progress, and reporting back to our community the net results and outcomes.

From the revitalization of our downtown to strategic investments in essential infrastructure, neighborhood enhancements, and strengthened communication channels, our commitment to building a vibrant and connected Galesburg has never been stronger. This renewed emphasis on excellence and sharing our story not only moves us closer to our goals but also cultivates a deeper sense of community pride and trust.

Looking ahead, our dedication to expanding job opportunities, supporting our residents, and nurturing a skilled workforce that mirrors the rich diversity and potential of our community remains unwavering. Through robust civic engagement and transparent governance, we are building a solid foundation for Galesburg's future success.

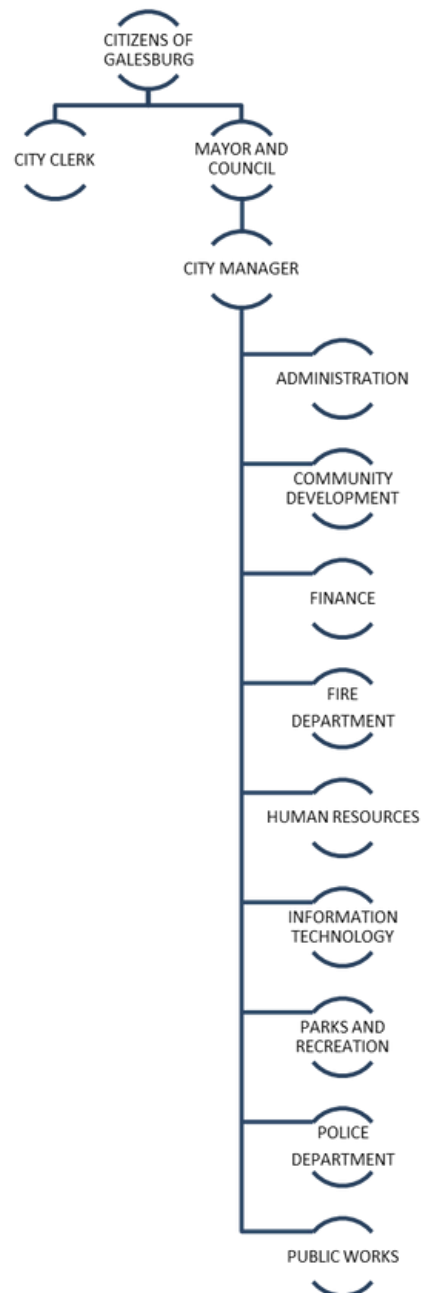
Thank you for your continued commitment to Galesburg. The path ahead is bright, and together, we will shape a future that honors our past and embraces the promise of what's next.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Eric Hanson", written in a cursive style.

Organizational Structure

Organizational Structure

The City of Galesburg operates under the Council-Manager form of government, with a City Manager hired by the City Council to serve as the chief administrative officer. Galesburg is dedicated to providing its residents with a comprehensive range of municipal and community services, underpinned by responsible financial management, open & transparent governance, highly skilled professional staff, and unwavering accountability in all its operations.



Elected Officials



Peter Schwartzman
Mayor



Kelli Bennewitz
City Clerk



Bradley Hix
First Ward



Wayne Dennis
Second Ward



Evan Miller
Third Ward



Dwight White
Fourth Ward



Heather Acerra
Fifth Ward



Sarah Carrington
Sixth Ward



Steve Cheesman
Seventh Ward

City Staff Leadership



Eric Hanson
City Manager



Steve Gugliotta
Community Development



Jennifer O'Hern
Finance



Chief Randy Hovind
Fire Department



Jessica Pease
Human Resources



Orlee Lucero
Information Technology



Don Miles
Parks & Recreation



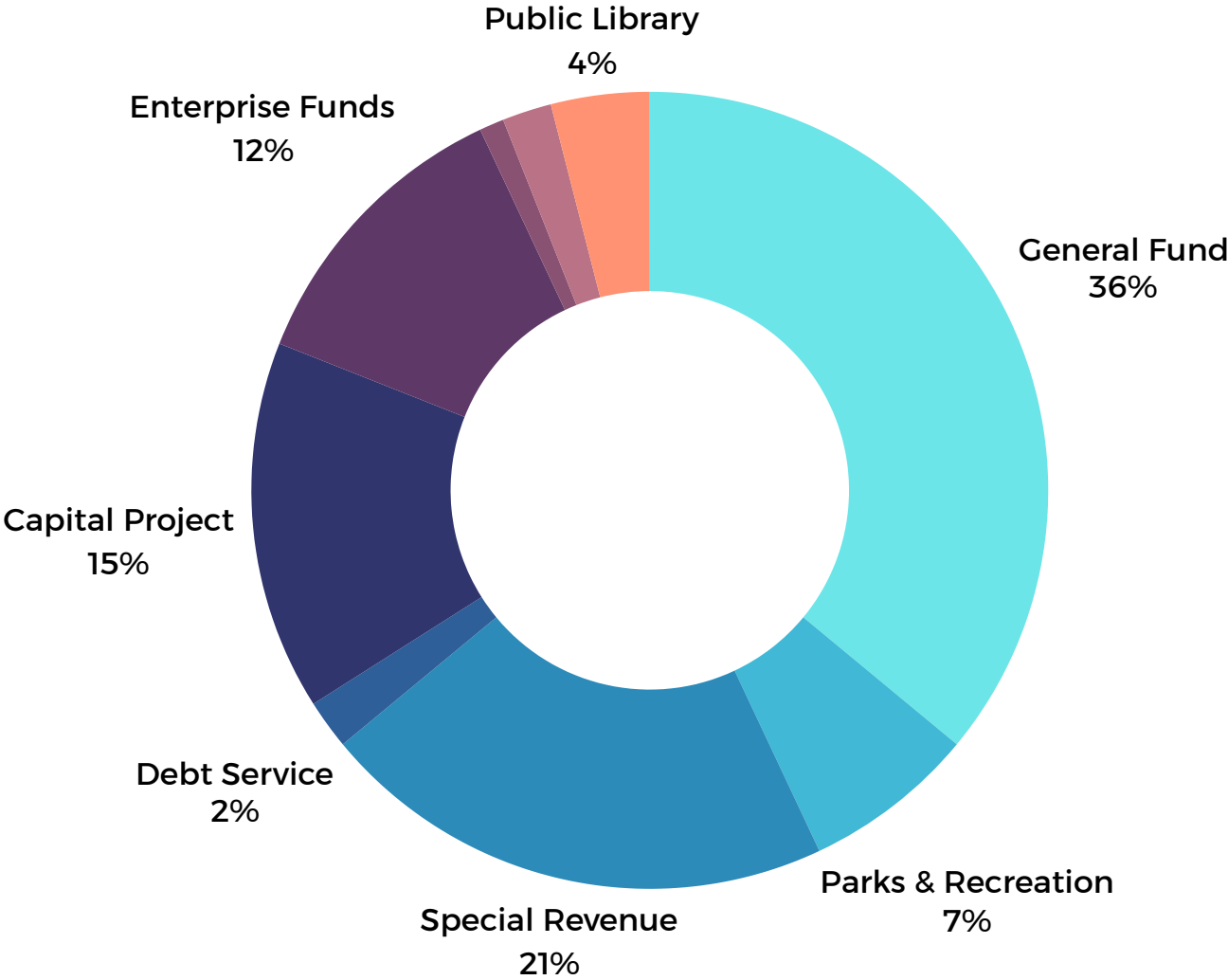
Acting Chief Kevin Legate
Police Department



Aaron Gavin
Public Works

Financial Highlights

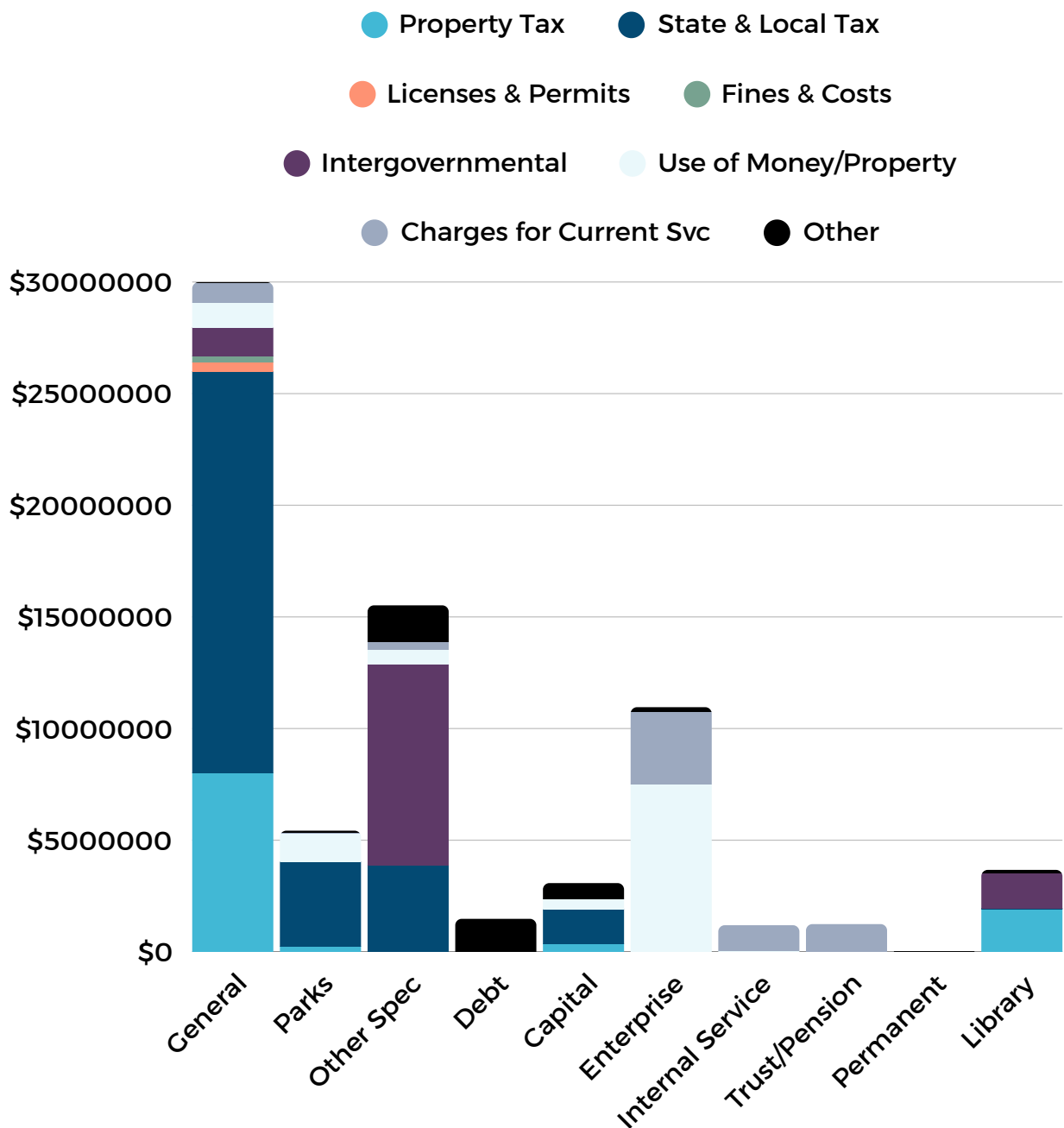
2024 Total Operating Budget



→	Total Operating Budget	\$85,309,185
→	General Fund Budget	\$30,677,785

Financial Highlights

2024 Budgeted Revenue by Funding Source



Property Tax Distribution



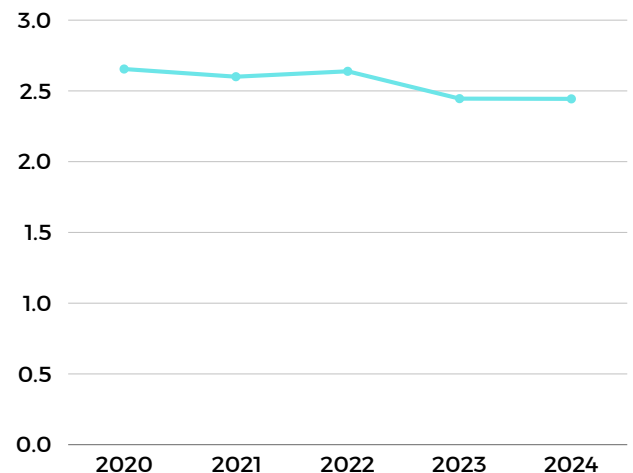
Where do my property taxes go?

→ School District	50.98%	→ Jr. College District	6.40%
→ Knox County	13.03%	→ Public Library	4.69%
→ City of Galesburg	10.99%	→ Sanitary District	3.08%
→ Galesburg Fire	9.52%	→ Township	1.31%
		→ Soil & Water Conseration	0.01%

*The City of Galesburg receives 20.51% of the property tax levy total (Galesburg & Galesburg Fire). On the tax bill, it is expressed as Galesburg City, 15.68%; however, only 10.99% of the 15.68% goes to the City, with 4.69% levied and recieved by the independent Public Library Board, as illustrated above. The Fire Protection tax levy for the city is listed separately on the tax bill (9.52%), but is levied and recieved by the City of Galesburg for fire protection services.

City of Galesburg Tax Rates

→ 2024	2.4438
→ 2023	2.4454
→ 2022	2.6386
→ 2021	2.6004
→ 2020	2.6547



Administration

The City Manager is hired by the City Council to oversee and manage all city staff and operations. The department also provides communication and legal services for the organization.

City Manager

In December 2023, Eric Hanson was hired as the Galesburg City Manager, which in turn drove many advances during 2024, geared to modernize, improve, and streamline the city's efforts to achieve high priority goals.



Strategic Planning

During 2024, the City engaged in a strategic planning and goal development process, which defined strategic priorities and set a roadmap for the future of Galesburg. This initiative involved focus groups with community stakeholders and staff, as well as leadership interviews, culminating in a strategic planning workshop with the City Council. The outcome is a detailed strategic plan, incorporated on pages [43 - 47](#).

→ Total Employees	250
→ Total Budget	\$85.3 M
→ General Fund Budget	\$30.67 M
→ Capital Improvement Budget	\$17.1 M

Administration

Economic Growth

Successfully negotiated three significant development agreements to locate and grow commerce in Galesburg, resulting in new construction, renovation of existing facilities, and job creation.

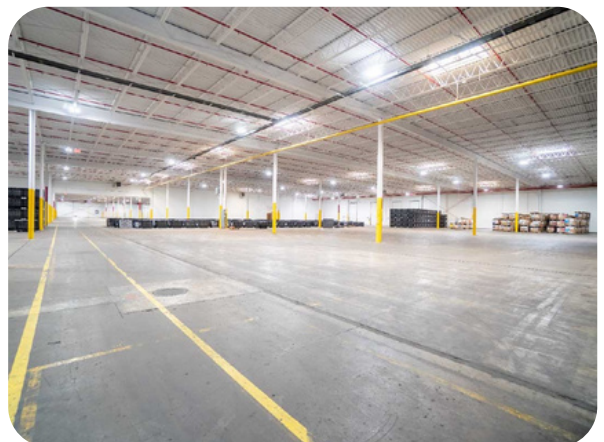
- Development Agreement with Western Smokehouse Partners to retain the company headquarters in downtown Galesburg, retain seven headquarters jobs, and create 25 jobs (10 headquarters positions and 15 manufacturing) with a total minimum payroll for new/retained positions of \$2.175 million infused into our local economy.
- Development Agreement with Graham Hospital Association for roadway alignment to create a second entrance to the new medical facility at 2028 N. Seminary. Overarching benefits include redevelopment of an underutilized property, road alignment, job creation, revenue creation, and increased medical service options and capacity within the community.
- Development Agreement with Thrushwood Farms Quality Meats, Inc. for expansion of snack stick production, which would fully utilize the remaining portion of the former Maytag facility, initially generating \$45 - \$50 million in investment, and creating 150 - 180 new jobs.



Jobs Created 205+



Private Investment \$64M+



"We believe in the potential of this community and are excited to create new jobs that will provide stability and prosperity for local families. This project will not only increase our production capacity but also strengthen our ties to the community, fostering a collaborative environment."

- Matt Bormann, Chief Executive Officer, Western Smokehouse Partners.

Administration

Economic Growth

In addition to the development agreements detailed on the prior page, the city utilizes several incentives, including Enterprise Zone, Tax Increment Financing (TIF), Small Business Grants, and Downtown Gap Revolving Loans to grow the local economy. The total estimated economic impact is illustrated below.

→ New developments or expansions

23

→ New Jobs

326+

→ Private Investment

\$113M+



\$25M



In 2024, the City applied for a \$25M BUILD Grant from the US Dept. of Transportation for rail infrastructure at the Galesburg Business Park property, which was awarded in January 2025.

77%

of citizens selected attracting industry and jobs as a top priority for Galesburg in the 2022 Community Survey, ranking it the top item that should receive the most emphasis in coming years.

Administration

Communications

- Furthered community engagement and transparency through continual communication of city news, progress, and initiatives via a variety of mechanisms, both internally to staff and elected officials, as well as externally to citizens, media, and stakeholders.
- Coordinated and prepared thorough materials for 22 City Council meetings and three work sessions, including creation of agendas and e-packets encompassing 267 city council action items.

→ **Press Releases 204**

- Issued 204 press releases
- Sent 118+ meeting notices for city boards & commissions
- Website administration and management, including content creation and approval
- 300+ website updates reviewed
- Routed/responded to 502 citizen requests initiated through the website
- Reinvigorated the City's Linked-in page for increased professional information sharing and HR recruitment

→ **Avg. Reach 20,633**

- Managed social media presence
- Promoted transparency & inclusion through access to information on multiple platforms.
- City of Galesburg Government Facebook
 - 7.6K followers
 - 20,633 average post reach
 - 3,455 average post engagement
- Additional Facebook pages managed by departments, including Parks & Rec, GPD, Bunker Links, Transit, KCEMA

Community Partnerships & Engagement

- Reinvigorated purposeful town-gown relationships with Knox College and Carl Sandburg College to further mutually beneficial projects and initiatives.
- Established partnership priorities with The Orpheum Theatre, resulting in increased programming and the resurgence of the community asset.
- Achieved regional airport status, and officially named the airport in honor of Harrel W. Timmons, who founded Jet Air, Inc., the fixed base operator (FBO) of the Galesburg airport, in 1969 and served as the President of the FBO until his retirement in 2023.
- Continued to partner with the Knox County Housing Authority to provide funding for a low-barrier shelter to provide temporary shelter and resources for recovery for unhoused individuals.
- Continued to partner with Knox County Area Partnership for Economic Development (KCAP) to further economic growth, job retention, and workforce development.

→ **Total Followers**
All City Facebook pages

43,311

Administration

Legal & Administrative Adjudication

- Entered into an agreement with Davis & Campbell, LLC for city attorney legal services
- Provided research, opinions, and represented the city's interest in all legal matters and litigation.
- Administrative Adjudication hearings held twice a month at Galesburg City Hall
 - 1,537 city ordinance violation cases processed, including property maintenance violations, license/registration violations, parking, nuisance, impound & tow hearings
 - 507 cases brought into compliance and/or paid fines prior to the hearing
 - 1,030 cases proceeded to hearing with a judgment entered by the Hearing Officer

Innovation & Improvement

- Completed a full facility assessment and energy audit to evaluate current facilities and plan for future projects to improve the longevity of buildings while reducing energy costs.
- Evaluated a complete budget cycle under the direction of a new City Manager and Finance Director to gauge current processes and procedures and identify opportunities for enhancement.
- Appointed leadership positions, including Directors for Finance, Parks & Recreation, Human Resources, IT, and Public Works, to fill openings and move each department forward.
- Refined strategic approach to organizational and personnel management with increased focus on collaboration, modernization of processes, accountability, and renewed focus on established goals.
- Identification of long-term goals and continual advocacy of those objectives at the local, state, and federal levels.
- Evaluation and refinement of vehicle acquisition procedures to ensure a right-sized, quality fleet, leveraging leasing to achieve optimal value.
- Led staff through new options for electrical aggregation, resulting in joining the Central Illinois Municipal Aggregation (CIMA) group to leverage increased buying power.



Links to Key City Documents from 2024

Strategic
Plan

Transportation
Plan

Housing
Study

City Clerk's Office

The City Clerk's Office is responsible for maintaining the official records of the city, as well as issuing licenses and registrations.

- Managed and maintained 27 City Council meetings, including meeting notes and minutes.
- Processed 29 ordinances and 35 resolutions in 2024.
- Submitted ordinances for codification twice in 2024, including online updates and department supplements.
- Maintained and updated the internal Traffic Appendix.
- Completed a significant records disposal of 74 cubic feet with the Illinois State Records Commission.
- Processed 285 public records requests, averaging a two-day completion time.
- Reviewed 11.98k attachments and provided 20.36 GB of data.
- Sold 42 cemetery deeds, 64 grave space openings, and 11 scattering garden deeds.
- Sold 32 Veteran Memorial Bricks



- Issued 4,682 licenses to businesses (liquor, rentals, contractors, etc.)
- Registered 1,360 animals
- Submitted over 450 code violations to undergo the Administrative Adjudication process

→ Licenses	4,682
→ Animal license tags	1,360
→ Record Requests	285

Community Development

The Community Development Department supports Galesburg's growth and quality of life by administering planning & zoning, economic development, inspections & permitting, housing grants, code enforcement, buildings & grounds, public transit, and the residential refuse contract.



Small Business Grants

\$85,000



Staff

30 Full-time / 21 Part-time



Recycling

1,689 Tons



Housing Repair Assistance

\$421,270

Community Development

Enterprise Zone Incentives

An Enterprise Zone is a designated area where businesses can access tax incentives and regulatory relief to support growth and job creation. These zones help revitalize communities by attracting new investment, encouraging expansion, and improving economic opportunities for residents and local businesses.

\$1,089,830



In 2024, seven businesses utilized Enterprise Zone incentives, receiving around \$1.09 million in sales tax exemptions—reducing project costs and supporting local growth, job creation (76), and reinvestment in the community.

\$36,377,681



Roughly \$66,260 in permit fees were waived, helping leverage an estimated \$36.4 million in private investment across the seven projects—boosting economic activity, retaining jobs (311), and strengthening the local business landscape.

Downtown Gap Revolving Loans

Smokin Willies BBQ, LLC received a \$62,400 revolving loan to assist with purchasing working capital, inventory, fixtures & furniture, and machinery & equipment to establish their new location at 161 N Cherry St. The project was approved in December 2023, and was paid out in 2024.

Tax Increment Financing



Tax Increment Financing (TIF) supports local development by using future tax revenue from rising property values to fund public improvements—helping revitalize underused areas, attract private investment, and strengthen the local economy.

\$45,127



In 2024, Smokin Willis BBQ, LLC completed a project totaling \$227,157. It received \$26,136 in TIF support, alongside a \$18,991 grant partially funding a façade improvement project. Both projects were approved in December 2023 and completed in 2024.

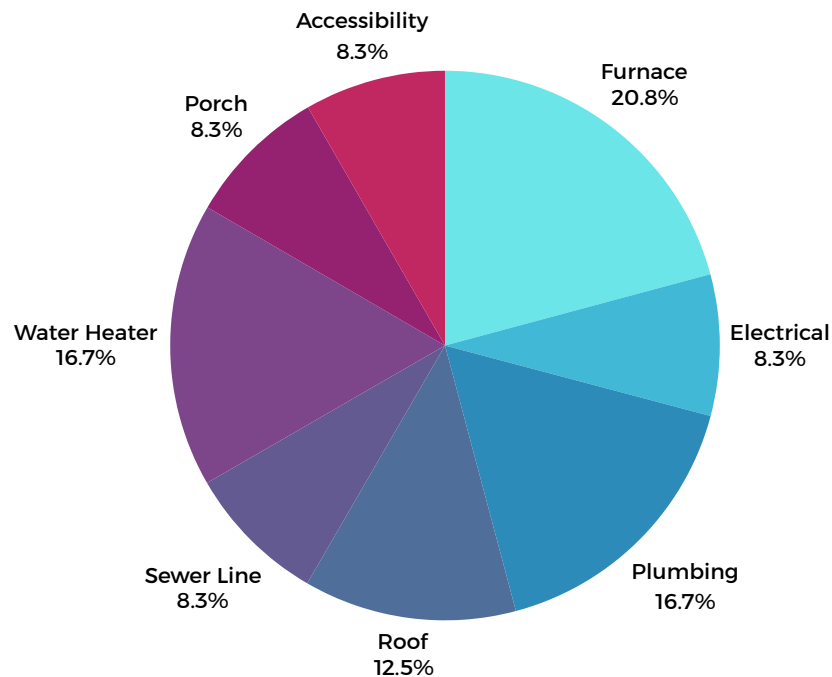
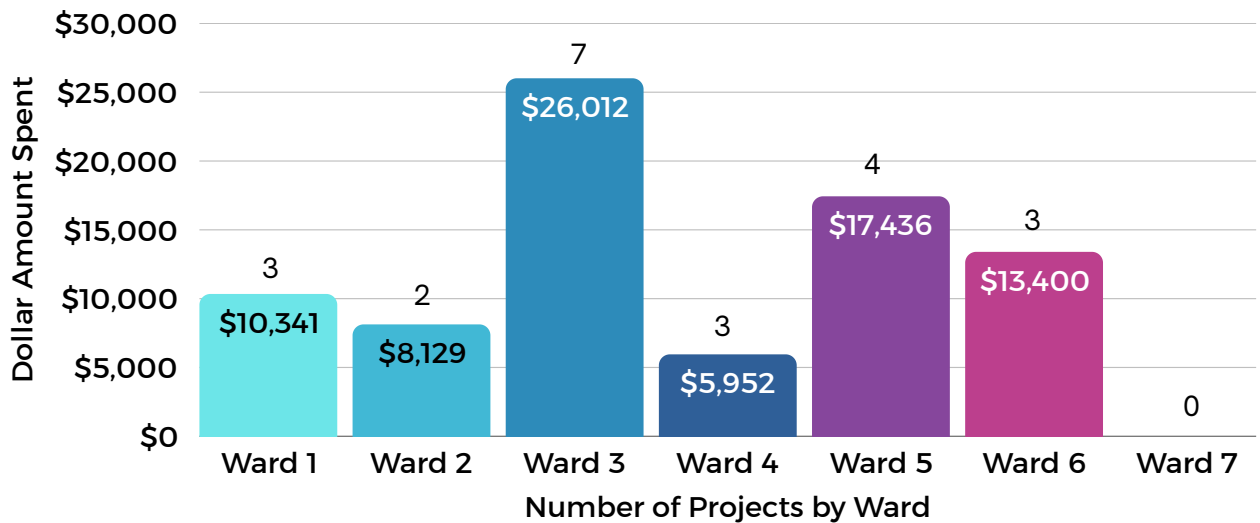
Minority Owned, Women Owned & Urban Agriculture Business Incentive Programs

In 2024, six businesses received a total of two Southside Occupancy and five Business Startup grants. One Urban Agriculture grant was also awarded. New ventures included a retail shop, home-based agriculture, a tattoo studio, a youth softball facility, behavioral therapy services, and a 360-degree event photography business.

Community Development

Housing Repair Assistance Program

The local Housing Repair Assistance Program helps income-eligible, owner-occupied, single-family homeowners bring properties up to housing standards, meet local codes, and add accessibility upgrades—enhancing both housing quality and residents' quality of life. In 2024, the program supported 22 repair projects.



Community Development

\$400,000



Through a \$400,000 grant from the Illinois Housing Development Authority's 2023 Home Repair & Accessibility Program, administered by Western Illinois Regional Council (WIRC), eight home renovation projects were completed or underway: one accessibility upgrade, two roof repairs, and five full rehabs. The grant scope was completed in March 2025.

\$650,000



The City partnered with WIRC to secure a \$650,000 grant from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity for single-family housing rehabilitation. Awarded in April 2024, the funding will support renovations for approximately 10 homes over the next two years. WIRC hosted a public meeting in November to guide applicants through the process.

\$300,000

The DCEO Community Development Block Grant-CV Healthy Houses grant aims to help landlords replace HVAC systems in rental units (6 or fewer) occupied by low-to-moderate income tenants. A \$300,000 grant application was submitted on November 6, 2024.

Neighborhood Revitalization

The City continues to prioritize housing improvements through local programs and competitive state grants that support safer, more livable homes. In 2024, eight homes were completed through the Illinois Housing Development Authority's Home Repair and Accessibility Program, and 22 more were approved through the local Housing Repair Program. These efforts represent a combined investment of approximately \$421,270—funding accessibility upgrades, roof repairs, and code-compliant electrical and plumbing improvements that strengthen neighborhoods and improve residents' quality of life.

Demolition Grant

In September 2023, the City received a \$562,000 IHDA Strong Communities grant to support future demolitions and related cleanup efforts. In 2024, \$90,880 in reimbursements were processed—helping eliminate blight, reduce maintenance costs, improve safety, and make neighborhoods more welcoming for residents, while paving the way for future investment.

Community Development



Planning

- Six Minor Subdivision Plats (Senneff Subdivision, People's Lumber and Coal Company Subdivision, Car Wash Addition, Benedict Subdivision, Seminary Square Commercial Resub No. 4, Fritzler Estates Extension Two)
- Seven site plans reviewed for new developments and/or additions
- Seven variances (setbacks)
- Five sign variances (height, number, size)
- Five zoning amendments (NE corner of Saluda Rd & Huston St, 755 N Henderson St, 9 parcels N of 2135 Grand Ave, 275 N Seminary St, 40 E Simmons St)
- Six surplus properties sold during the annual sale of City property.
- 905 Maple Ave (former Churchill School) sold to Benedict Family Foundation for Addictions
- Housing Study from Novogradac completed and received. The data and recommendations in the report will help guide an understanding of Galesburg's housing needs and current market.



Historic Preservation

- The Galesburg Landmark Commission presented the Knox-Galesburg Symphony with a Letter of Recognition for their adaptive re-use renovation of the former Knox County Farm Bureau Building at 95 N Seminary St.
- One property, 2231 Windish Dr, was designated a Local Landmark. It is the only remaining chapel of three constructed as part of the Mayo General Hospital in 1943.

Property Management

- Offered 10 vacant, surplus lots for sale to the public, with six sold through a bid process, returning vacant parcels into productive use and supporting neighborhood revitalization.
- Oversaw several facility upgrades, including new flooring in the first and second-floor common areas of City Hall and fresh paint in the basement and first floor. At Central Fire, four exterior doors were replaced and upgraded with secure fob access.

Community Development



Refuse, Recycling & Yard Waste

- The City contracts with Waste Management (WM) to provide household refuse, yard waste and recycling.
- The WM service contract includes an At Your Door Service, which allows citizens to contact Waste Management to schedule pickup of hazardous or hard to recycle household items.



2024 Residential Refuse, Yard Waste & Recycling	
Work Days	261
Ruse Loads	891
Refuse Tonage	8,528
Oversized Stickers	30
Appliances Collected	2,644
Yard Waste Tonage	1,811
Recycling Tonage	1,689
Recycling participation	85.84%
96-gallon Container Rentals	10,854

2024 At Your Door Service	
Type	Pounds
Chemicals	8,126.65
Electronics	63,015.63
Not Classified (latex pain, shaprs, etc)	13,186.28
Universal (aerosol, batteries, fluorescents)	1,517.36
Total Pounds	85,845.92
Percent Recylced	95.55%
Total Pickup	1,146

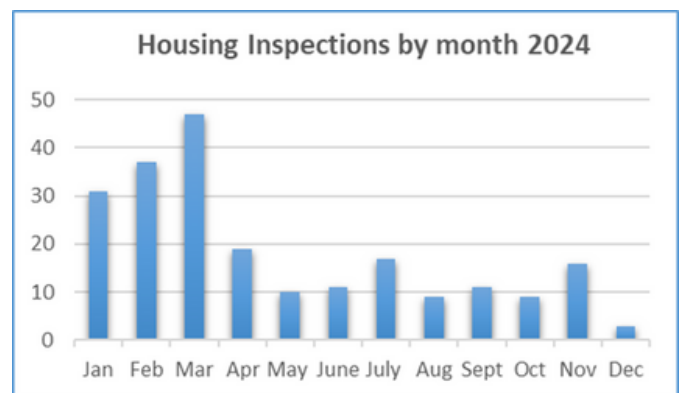
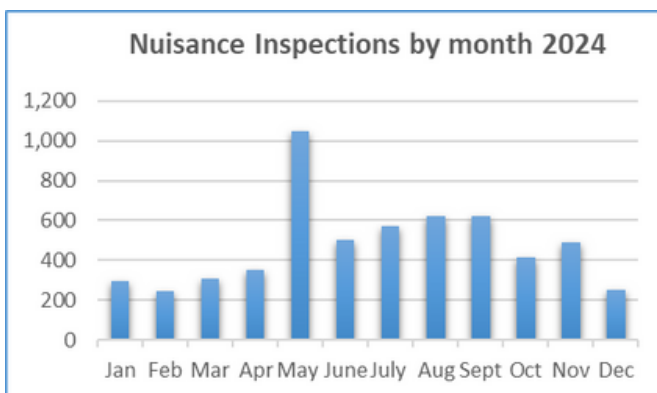
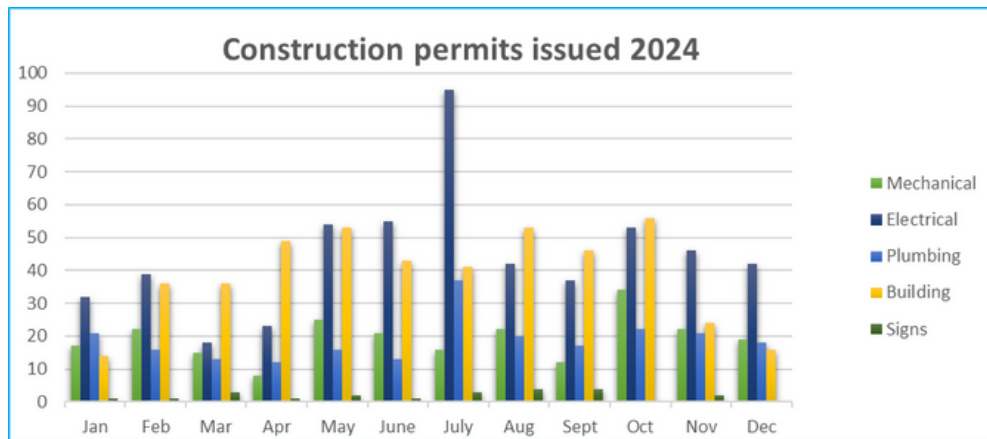
Community Development

Permits & Inspections

- 396 Building permits
- 233 Mechanical permits
- 536 Electrical permits
- 226 Solar permits
- 226 Plumbing permits
- 22 Sign permits
- 71 Demolition permits
- 43 Plan reviews of commercial projects
- 16 City demolitions of dilapidated structures completed
- 2 Property owners came into compliance after starting the demolition process

Property Inspections

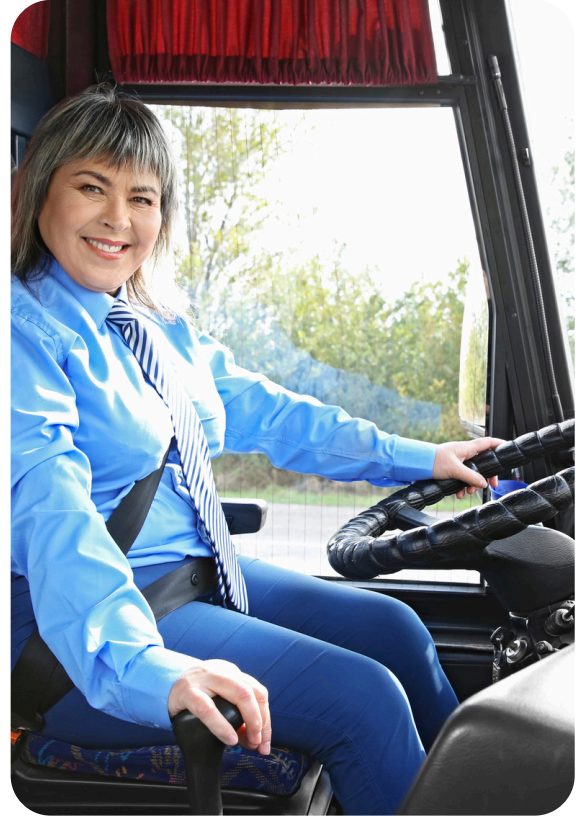
- 5,711 Nuisance inspections
- 220 Housing violation inspections
- 283 Rental inspections
- 325 Cases referred to Administrative Adjudication
- 744 Code Violations resolved
- 460 Weed violations resolved



Community Development

Public Transportation

- Bid out new public transportation dispatch software, funded by Illinois Rebuild Round II Grant. The new software allows dispatchers full schedule visibility and client communication; implementation planned for 2025.
- Received IDOT approval to use CARES funds to replace a key fixed-route hybrid bus engine component.
- Secured three used vehicles through IDOT as no cost transfers to support fixed route and paratransit service.
- Completed in-depth drug and alcohol program review in collaboration with IDOT.
- Launched new app showing bus routes, arrival times, and service updates for riders.
- Partnered with City Fleet Superintendent to oversee Transit Garage operations and improve efficiency.
- IDOT confirmed order for seven medium-duty buses, funded by 2022 Consolidated Vehicle Procurement (CVP) grant application.
- Negotiated use of \$900,000 federal grant to purchase super medium-duty buses for fixed routes.
- Awarded two electric paratransit vehicles and chargers; coordinating with IDOT on delivery timeline.
- Renewed ride service contracts with Sandburg College, Knox College, and Knox County Housing Authority.



- The City completed a yearlong transit study with Nelson-Nygaard, funded by a \$150,000 federal planning grant. Key recommendations included updates to the fixed route system, expanded county service through on-demand transit, and establishing a dedicated downtown transfer point to improve access and efficiency for riders across the region.



Fixed-Route & Para-Transit

120,618 rides



Carl Sandburg College & Knox College

13,349 rides



Knox County Housing Authority & Western IL Area Agency on Aging

23,473 rides

Finance Department

The Finance Department manages budgeting, payroll, utility billing, debt management, and investments, while maintaining the City’s financial health and internal controls.



- Each month, assisted approximately 12,000 customers and processed utility bill payments, ensuring timely service and accurate billing.
 - The average monthly utility bill in 2024 was \$126, covering water, sewer, and refuse services.
- Over 10,000 bi-weekly and election payroll payments were processed, totaling \$19.7 million for City, Library, and Election employees. The department also submitted monthly, quarterly, and annual reports to the State of Illinois and Federal government, and issued W-2s to employees across all departments.
- Issued 267 purchase orders, 49 requests for bids, and 8 requests for proposals, ensuring the city’s procurement needs were met efficiently. Additionally, a successful Purple Wave auction was held to sell unused and obsolete City-owned items, generating value for the community.

→	Utility Payments	12,000 customers
→	Average Monthly Water Bill	\$126
→	Payments Processed	19,565

Finance Department

Certificate of Excellence

For the 28th consecutive year, the department received the GFOA Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting for fiscal year 2022. The department also collaborated with an audit firm to complete the fiscal year 2023 audit and submitted the Annual Financial Report to GFOA for certification review.



\$14 Million



Worked closely with City Council and department heads to prepare the 2025 fiscal year budget, which included over \$14 million for Capital Improvement Projects.

Property Tax



Property tax rates were lowered, reflecting the city's ongoing commitment to fiscal responsibility and community benefit.

Payment Processing

A total of 19,565 transactions were entered to process payments for City, Library, Election, and ETSB vendors, totaling \$54 million in services and products. The department also managed revenue payments and maintained ongoing contact with local businesses, while providing monthly Treasurer reports to the Clerk and City Council.

Fire Department

The Fire Department provides professional & compassionate emergency medical and fire suppression services to our citizens.

- Responded to 32 structure fires, 43 other fire-related responses, and 5,520 total calls
- Maintained a minimum staffing level of 11
- Average response time of 3 minutes and 43 seconds.
- Received and prepared two new engines for service - Engine 52 and 53.
- Actively engaged local youth through career fairs, school visits, and social media to promote fire service careers.
- Completed facility improvements, including updating the electrical system & water pipe repairs at Central Station.
- Led & maintained hazardous materials and technical rescue teams.
- In partnership with the Red Cross, installed 233 smoke alarms in 103 Galesburg homes to ensure every resident has access to this critical life-saving equipment.
- Rolled out the KCEMA Family Disaster Plan to the public. This detailed document walks a family through gathering all the vital information needed during an emergency, and complements the Emergency Preparedness Guide staff published in 2023.
- Applied for and awarded a \$23,416 EMPG Grant for continuation of Knox County Emergency Management operations.



→ **Fire Services**

5,595 total responses

→ **Structure Fires**

32

→ **Average Response Time**

3 minutes 43 seconds

Fire Department

Fire Prevention

GFD continually works towards the goal of fire prevention through inspections, education, and permitting.

Fire Services	2024	2023
Fire Investigations	20	36
IFC Permits	252	226
System Installation Permits	21	13
Permitted Inspections	257	113
Non-permitted Inspections	128	87

Community Involvement

- GFD raised \$31,027.86 for the Muscular Dystrophy Association, with \$27,604.23 collected during a three-day street campaign. Thanks to strong community support, we ranked second in Illinois, just behind the Chicago Fire Department.
- Participated in many community events throughout the year, including the Firefighter Day at MDA Kids Camp, Fire Prevention Week, and multiple parades.



Human Resources

The HR Department focuses on employee recruitment, benefits, and personnel management to create and support a productive work environment.

- Hired 22 new employees.
- 24 employees left employment with the city, including seven retirements, reflecting a turnover rate of approximately 10%, demonstrating efforts to maintain a stable and committed workforce.
- The average time to hire new employees was 32 days, ensuring that positions were filled efficiently to maintain operations and support the team.
- Successfully negotiated a three-year contract with the Police and AFSCME Unions.
- Held mid-year negotiations with AFSCME to address evolving needs and ensure continued alignment with employee and organizational goals.
- Seven employees were promoted this year, illustrating a commitment to recognizing and advancing talent within the organization.
- Continued collaboration with legal counsel for management of approximately 35 new and ongoing workers' compensation claims.



- Successfully renewed the 635-member group health plan with BCBS for the 7th consecutive year and managed the open enrollment process internally, ensuring smooth transitions for all members.
- Renewed liability & property insurance, including assisting IML RMA with appraisal valuations of insured property, increasing the schedule to \$132M

→	Employees Hired	22
→	Employees Promoted	7

Information Technology (IT)

The IT Department provides crucial administrative and technical support across several systems, ensuring the smooth operation of the city's technology infrastructure.



- Integration of Public Safety and City IT into one comprehensive IT Department.
- Managed installation of backup AC system for the network computer room.
- Provided technical planning, project management, and fiber splices for relocation of the 911 dispatch center and backup dispatch center.
- Completion of the three-year City Hall cable plant redesign & upgrade.
- Upgrade of the mobile device management system.
- Initial upgrades for the Unified Command Vehicle platform.
- Upgraded the secure water plant communications to increase speed and reliability.
- Upgraded the special events webform.
- Uploaded data for 23 FOIA requests.
- Transitioned to new antivirus security.
- Successfully upgraded the SCADA servers and Emergency Call Out system, ensuring improved performance and reliability for water management.
- Managed recycling of more than 5,000 lbs of obsolete electronics



Systems Maintained

50+



Electronics Recycled

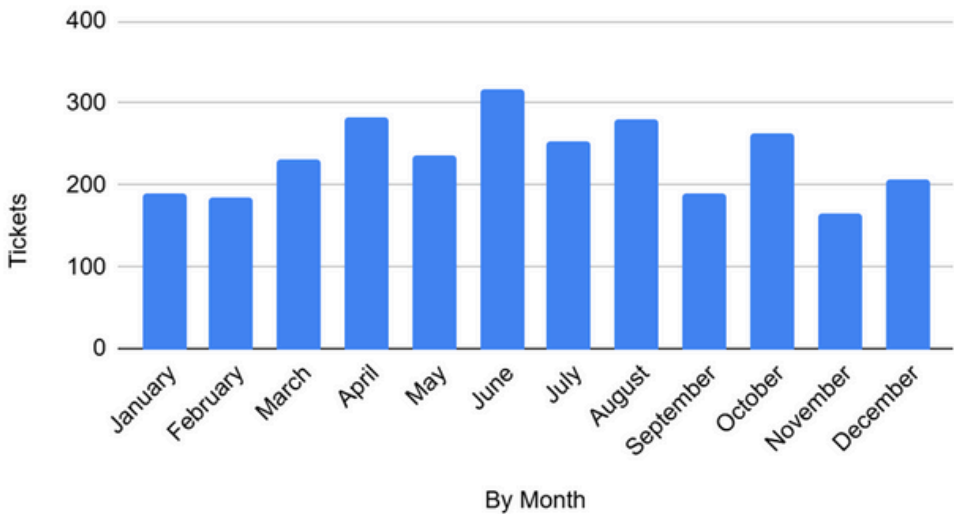
5,000 lbs+

Information Technology (IT)

Technology Administration & Support

- Administration & upgrades of the water systems SCADA servers
- Maintained the City Hall AV system, which streams City Council and Planning & Zoning meetings online, enhancing public transparency.
- Administration of VoIP telephone system, connecting 300 users across 13 locations.
- Manages city-wide video surveillance system.
- Expanded the city-wide wireless network, improving communication for residents, businesses, and city operations.
- Replaced 38 computers
- Set up 47 new users, and disabled 32 users
- Administration of cybersecurity and PCI training programs
- Provided technical support for all city users, including public safety and 911.
- Implemented robust backup and maintenance of disaster recovery systems to protect and quickly restore essential city data.

Help Desk Tickets by Month



→	Help Desk Tickets	2,802
→	User Updates	79+

Parks & Recreation

The Parks and Recreation Department provides park management and maintenance, as well as recreation facilities and programs.

The Parks and Recreation Department engaged the community with over 100 free programs, including:

- Easter Egg Hunt
- Fishing Derby
- Movie in the Park
- Touch a Truck
- Monarch Migration Festival
- Yoga in the Park
- Valentine's for Seniors

Nature programs included:

- Second Saturdays
- Kindness Rock Garden painting

Summer events included:

- Lakeside Waterpark themed activity days
- Mobile Playground



The department is responsible for much of the maintenance & beautification throughout the City, including:

- Parks
- Linwood & East Linwood Cemetery
- Airport
- City-owned properties, such as the square & welcome signs.



Lake Storey Park

#1 Tourist Attraction



Park Shelters

382 reservations



Bunker Links Golf Course

33,203 rounds played

Parks & Recreation

HT Custer Park

Renovations at HT Custer Park were completed in the spring, featuring new playground equipment, a restroom building, an additional picnic shelter, walking and bicycle safety paths, an upgraded parking lot, and a pollinator/raingarden. The \$1,025,000 project included \$400,000 from a 2022 Open Space Land Acquisition and Development (OSLAD) Grant.

There is also additional work being done to upgrade the backstop and netting down the baselines to increase safety at the ballfield.



500 feet



Widening and resurfacing of the walking path at North Lake Storey was completed.

Green Awards



For the 24th consecutive year, we were awarded Tree City USA status and received the Tree Growth Award for the 7th year, including the last two years in a row.



Parks & Recreation

Lancaster Park

Lancaster Park renovations were completed in the summer, thanks to a 2023 OSLAD Grant. Upgrades included new playground equipment, a picnic shelter, a half basketball court, and an improved parking lot, with a total project cost of \$450,000.

\$500,000



OSLAD Grant awarded for a future park at the Cooke property. With matching funds, the project will total \$1,000,000.

18-hole DGC



A new Disc Golf Course was built and carved into the natural areas of Lake Storey Park.

Dale Kelley Tot Lot

- In 2024, Dale Kelley Tot Lot received new playground equipment and safety surfacing. The new swing set was funded by the Rotary Club.
- A shelter has been purchased and will be erected in early 2025.
- Additional work being undertaken at HT Custer is the upgrade to the backstop system and adding netting down the baselines to increase safety at the ball field.

Lakeside Nature Center

Lakeside Nature Center added an outdoor classroom and friendship seating circle in the woods (Eagle Scout Project), and new concrete pad. The Outdoor Nature Preschool for ages 3-5 saw growing interest, alongside monthly outdoor education, recreation, and community outreach programs

1,494



Lakeside Nature Center hosted a variety of outdoor nature programs, with a total of 1,494 participants.

\$25,944



With the purchase and replacement of 2 paddleboats and over 1,600 rental hours, Lake Storey Beach saw a revenue of \$25,944.

Parks & Recreation

Lakeside Waterpark

Serving over 16,200 patrons in 2024, Lakeside Waterpark received several upgrades this year, including:

- Main Circulation Pump replacement
- Two pool heater replacements
- Liner replacement for the Lap Pool

2024 Revenue for the Waterpark was \$145,394.



Mobile Playground

The Mobile Playground visited over 30 events in the months from April to September, allowing 2,460 patrons to enjoy its use.



Parks & Recreation

Hawthorne Pool & Gym

Hawthorne Municipal Pool received Phase II upgrades, including a new boiler, humidity control system (delayed to spring 2025), and revamped locker rooms with new lockers and LED lighting. The gymnasium hosted 4,979 visitors, while the pool had 10,225 patrons, despite being closed for renovations from June to August.

Hawthorne Gymnasium Patrons

4,979

↑

Hawthorne Pool Patrons

10,225

↑

Allison Campground

The campground saw a 200-reservation increase, earning \$135,025 in total revenue, including \$129,071 in overnight stays and \$5,954 in firewood and ice sales. After a transfer to Lakeside Waterpark for free passes provided to each site between Memorial Day and Labor Day, total revenue reached \$125,218.

Reservations

1,763

↑

Revenue

\$125,218

↑

Bunker Links Golf Course

Our Centennial year brought record rounds and revenue. We replaced the bridge on hole #15 and began a drainage project to reduce course closures. New tables and chairs were added to the Golf Shop to improve customer experience.

Total Revenue

\$835,508.25

↑

Rounds Played

33,203

↑

Linwood & East Linwood Cemeteries

There were 68 burials (full, cremation, and scattering) and 34 grave space sales at Linwood and East Linwood Cemeteries. A new Heavy Equipment Operator was hired to replace a retiree.

Number of Burials

68

↑

Grave Spaces Sold

34

↑

Police Department

The Galesburg Police Department is dedicated to ensuring the safety of the community through proactive and effective law enforcement.



- Responded to 53,632 calls for service, showcasing the department's commitment to public safety and community support.
- Welcomed five new patrol officers and one dispatcher to enhance our team and improve response times across the city.
- Oversaw the development of a new dispatch and back-up dispatch center.
- New hybrid patrol vehicles were added to the fleet, improving fuel efficiency and reducing the department's environmental footprint while maintaining operational readiness.
- Took part in several community events, including National Night Out, Shop with a Cop, the 9/11 Remembrance Stair Climb, and Trick or Treat activities.
- Officer Jake Taylor was honored as Crime Stopper Officer of the Year, recognizing his exceptional contributions to crime prevention and community safety.
- Obtained a Body Worn Camera grant through ILETSB and Small Rural Tribal (SRT)
- Secured a STEP grant through IDOT, enabling increased traffic enforcement efforts and improved road safety.
- Officer Eryn Pearson was recognized by AAIM for her outstanding efforts in DUI enforcement, helping to keep Galesburg's roads safer.
- Actively participated in local recruitment fairs at Carl Sandburg College, Galesburg High School, Western Illinois University, and Knox College to attract new talent.

→ Dispatchers	20
→ Police Officers	53
→ Calls for Service	53,632

Public Works

The Public Works Department manages the operation, maintenance, and improvement of the City’s roadway and water infrastructure.

- Surveyed, designed, and inspected a federal aid project to resurface Carl Sandburg Drive from Henderson to Broad Street, enhancing both the roadway and the storm sewer system along the route.
- Surveyed, designed, and inspected a \$2.2 million project to resurface 14 streets throughout the City of Galesburg.
- Assisted the Parks Department with the design and inspection of the replacement of 500 feet of multi-use path on the north side of Lake Storey, as well as the replacement of a bridge at Bunker Links golf course.



- Assisted the Parks Department with the inspection of the construction of Lancaster Park.

→ Treated & Delivered Water	1.9 Billion Gallons
→ JULIE Locate Requests	6,260+
→ Replaced Sidewalks	6,900 feet
→ Streets Resurfaced	14

Public Works

Grant Funding

Applied for grants to make improvements to the South Street underpass and to rehabilitate a large diameter brick storm sewer near Monmouth Boulevard and South Street.

\$250,000



Secured a \$250,000 IDOT Highway Safety Improvement Program grant for preliminary engineering work on E. Main Street safety upgrades, between Grand Ave. & Michigan Avenue

\$2.4 Million



Opened bids for a \$2.4 million grant funded project to make streetscape improvements and replace the City parking lot on Simmons Street between Prairie Street and Kellogg Street. Construction will begin in the Spring of 2025.

Safe Routes to Schools

- Awarded a \$235,000 Safe Routes to School grant to install ADA-compliant sidewalks and curb ramps near Silas Willard School, with construction set for 2025.
- Completed a Safe Routes to School project replacing and adding sidewalks and ADA-compliant curb ramps near King and Lombard School.



Federal Grant Funds Received

Total for the City, across all departments

\$2.3 M+

Public Works



Streets Division

- Plowed and salted roadways during the winter season, including fighting consecutive snow storms in a two-week period in January requiring the use of 800 tons of salt, hauling 2,000 loads of snow, and 90 hours of overtime work.
- Replaced 200 feet of culverts and reshaped ditches to eliminate flooding issues.
- Repaired or replaced 20 bad stormwater inlets and manholes.
- Investigated and took over 29 street openings and made permanent repairs.
- Replaced over 6,900 feet of deteriorated sidewalk throughout the City (in-house & projects)
- Removed and replaced bad sections of North Cherry St., including pouring new concrete base and relaying the bricks.
- Hauled over 1,000 loads of leaves during the fall leaf pickup season.
- Trained six employees on assisting the Traffic Division with pavement striping operations during the summer.
- Installed a new jib crane in the Street Division building to allow staff to safely work on and repair plows and other heavy pieces of equipment.



Traffic Division

- Striped the City's streets over the summer months.
- Continued work on retrofitting lighting in City facilities with LED fixtures to save on energy costs. Locations included City Hall, the Public Safety Building, and Hawthorne Gym as well as the City parking lot at Waters and Cherry Street.
- Facilitated repairs to two of the large pumps that pump stormwater from the Sibley Underpass on E. Main Street.
- Performed street sign replacement including replacement of over 300 No Parking signs throughout the City.
- Responded to over 1,000 JULIE locate requests to mark City-owned underground electrical and fiber optic cable.
- Installed Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFB) at the crosswalk at South Street and Cedar Street near Knox College to improve pedestrian safety at that intersection.

Public Works



Water Division

- Responded to 5,264 JULIE locate requests to mark City-owned water mains and service lines.
- Responded to and repaired 33 water main breaks throughout the City.
- Repaired 50 water service lines.
- Repaired or replaced 13 water hydrants.
- Conducted 1,242 coliform tests for Galesburg and other public water supplies and conducted over 5,000 chemical analyses of Galesburg's drinking water.
- Began the design process for replacing the City's 5-million-gallon water storage reservoir at the W. Main Street water plant.
- Continue to work on solutions to address issues with PFAS contamination in the City's source water in Oquawka.
- Washed both the 4-million-gallon and 5-million-gallon water storage reservoirs at the W. Main Street water plant.
- Treated a total of 1.9 billion gallons of water delivered to City residents and outside customers.
- Resurfaced the parking lot at the W. Main Street water plant with new asphalt.
- Cleaned the water tower at Hawthorne.

Central Garage

- Installed equipment in the new Galesburg Police Department squad car fleet. This was the largest fleet swap project that Central Garage has ever undertaken.
- Installed snowplows on seven new trucks.
- Prepared the golf course maintenance equipment for use by Bunker Links throughout the season.
- Performed maintenance on 27 pieces of snow fighting equipment in preparation for the winter season.
- Maintained, serviced, and repaired 190 pieces of city equipment and vehicles ranging from police squad cars, fire trucks, large construction equipment, dump trucks, pickup trucks and cars.



Airport

- The FAA designated the airport as a Regional Airport, enhancing its ability to compete for funding and receive annual supplemental support for projects.
- Named the Galesburg Regional Airport in honor of Harrel W. Timmons.
- Held annual Stearman Fly-In Event
- Coordination with the airport consultant and IDOT Aeronautics continued on three projects: updating the Airport Master Plan, adding a new fuel island, and resurfacing the parking lot, all set to begin in 2025.

Selected Highlights

Project 350

Project 350, led by Special Project Coordinator Tom Simkins, was created in 2022 to harness the power of volunteers and plant 350 trees in the community over five years. In 2024, just three years into the program, the goal was exceeded. During 2024 alone, 218 trees were planted, with a grand total of 479 planted at the end of 2024.



Touch a Truck

The Parks & Recreation hosted a successful Touch a Truck Community Event.



Fishing Derby

Hosted the popular Youth Fishing Derby at Lincoln Park.



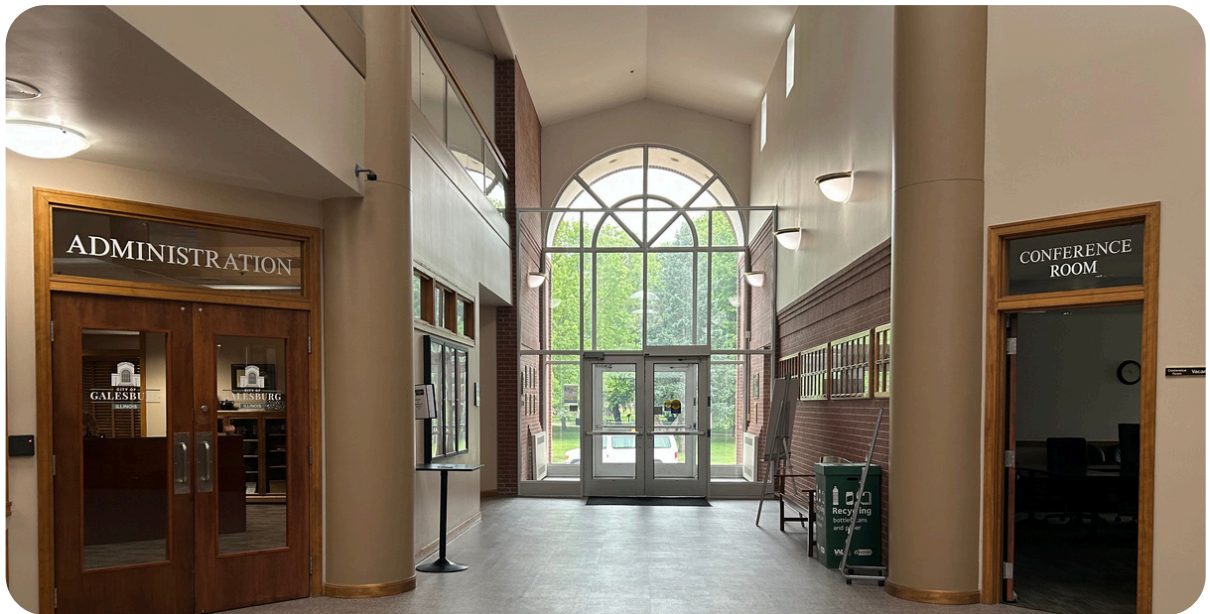
Selected Highlights

Community Engagement



Future Outlook

2024 was a year of tangible advancement for Galesburg, moving beyond the status quo to achieve significant forward momentum and accomplishments. It witnessed the development and initial implementation of a robust and clearly defined strategic plan that paves the way for a focused trajectory for future growth and prosperity.



Strategic Plan

A comprehensive strategic planning process was completed during 2024, which defined and prioritized the strategic goals and priorities for the City. This initiative involved community stakeholders and staff focus groups and leadership interviews, culminating in a strategic planning workshop with the City Council. The resulting strategic plan is incorporated into the following pages.

Strategic Priority Areas

- Community Development & Beautification
- Economic Development & Job Creation
- Community Engagement & Governance
- Infrastructure & Housing Improvements



The City of Galesburg

STRATEGIC PLANNING AND GOAL DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

Executive Summary

PREPARED OCTOBER
2024

City of Galesburg
City Hall



NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

Center for
Governmental Studies

Outreach Engagement and Regional Development



Introduction

In January 2024, the City of Galesburg (the “City”) engaged the Northern Illinois University Center for Governmental Studies (“NIU-CGS”) to facilitate the process of developing the City’s strategic plan. The strategic planning process included collecting internal and external feedback, consisting of focus groups with community stakeholders and staff and interviews with the City Council and administrative leadership.

Themes emerging from this feedback were shared at the City’s strategic planning leadership workshop held in August 2024. The findings were used to assist workshop participants in making informed decisions related to crafting a strategic vision and future direction for the City as an organization and the community it serves. Ultimately, workshop participants created strategic goals focusing on where the City wants to go as an organization in both the short and long term.

Executive-level strategic planning sessions are a staple for progressive organizations and are recommended to be done regularly. The full report provides a summary of the process and presents the consensus on strategic directions and goals for the City.

Visioning for the Future

During the strategic planning workshop, participants engaged in a visioning exercise to describe the desired future direction of the City by answering the question: “If you left the City and the community for 10-15 years, what do you think or hope to see when you return?” The word cloud summarizes their responses.



DID YOU KNOW?

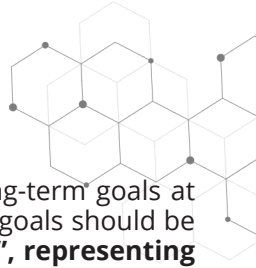


Galesburg is home to one of the largest rail yards in the country and was designated by the U.S. Congress to host the National Railroad Hall of Fame in 2004? It’s also where the historic 1858 Lincoln-Douglas debate took place at Knox College.

<https://www.ci.galesburg.il.us/>

Strategic Goals and Priority Areas

At the strategic planning leadership workshop, stakeholder input from the focus groups and interviews was shared in thematic form to help inform a series of discussions on leadership's visions for the future and the City's current strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges (S.W.O.C.). Participants ultimately used the workshop discussions and exercises to develop short- and long-term goals for the City.



High-Priority Strategic Goals

The City Council and administrative leadership developed seventeen short-term goals and fifteen long-term goals at the workshop. They were asked to delineate, via an online ranking exercise after the workshop, which goals should be given the highest priority. **The following highest priority goals are offered as a process "snapshot", representing the most important strategic goals for the Council and staff to address in the months and years ahead.** To view the full list of goals developed and ranking methodology, please refer to the [full report](#).

SHORT-TERM 1- to 3-YEAR TIME FRAME

Develop a multi-year plan to invest in infrastructure improvements.

Improve the City's marketing and external communication strategies to ensure cohesive and accurate messaging to the variety of stakeholders, residents, and businesses across the community.

Use the 2024 Galesburg housing study to develop policies, programs, and approaches for short- and long-term housing needs while working to improve the mix of housing and housing stock.

Explore funding source options for long-term road and infrastructure maintenance needs across the community.

Analyze and resolve the City's water sourcing options and solutions for the next 60-100 years.

LONG-TERM 4- to 8-YEAR TIME FRAME

Continue to increase the City's investments and activities to foster and support broad economic development opportunities and actions in the community.

Capitalize on the City's airport as an asset with regular maintenance, improvements, and enhanced marketing for tourism.

Work with downtown businesses to make downtown a vibrant and active hub, including attracting outdoor dining and residential housing developers for mixed-use development.

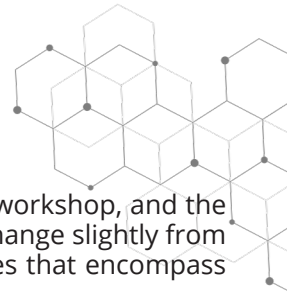
Work to address power infrastructure needs and deficits and improve the power grid in and around the City with electric utilities/providers.

Partner to help reduce and/or alleviate elements of poverty in the City.

Foster and facilitate a redevelopment plan for the Sandburg mall and the area surrounding the mall.

Strategic Priority Areas

Based on an evaluation of the entire process, including interviews, focus groups, discussions at the workshop, and the goals developed, four high-level strategic priority areas were identified. Strategic priority areas can change slightly from one strategic planning process to the next. These priority areas represent larger themes or priorities that encompass all the strategic goals. Full definitions, rationale, and goal alignment can be found in the full report.



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND BEAUTIFICATION

The City of Galesburg has a rich history worth celebrating. The City's proactive and passionate leadership, commitment to high quality of life, and strong support for the arts and culture are just a few of its strengths. Prioritizing beautification efforts and dedicating funds to accomplish beautification goals will not only help to enhance the City's aesthetic appeal, but also build a sense of community pride. By improving the gateways, streets, and sidewalks through public/private partnerships, residents and businesses can be inspired to invest more deeply in their community, fostering a stronger, more trusting relationship between the City government and its citizens.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND JOB CREATION

The City of Galesburg's central location and large size lend themselves to a bustling business district. Continued focus on revitalization and rehabilitation of downtown historic buildings will be important to achieving Galesburg's economic and community development goals, including creating jobs, increasing tourism dollars, and recruiting new businesses that will complement and diversify the City's business mix. The City can focus on areas of growth and expansion by employing tools such as façade grant programs, rehabilitation assistance, talent pipeline partnerships and other incentives to recruit and retain businesses.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

Community engagement and effective governance is vitally important for communities of all sizes. Whether it is listening to the needs of residents and businesses, delivering a cohesive message, or promoting the City's events and activities, clear communication and active engagement are high priorities for City staff and elected officials. Highlighting what makes Galesburg unique to current and potential residents, businesses, and tourists is essential for successful marketing and branding of the community. Moreover, community engagement enhances transparency, which is fundamental to effective governance.



INFRASTRUCTURE AND HOUSING IMPROVEMENTS

Proactively planning and rehabilitating the City's existing facilities along with strategic investments in the City's water and power infrastructure are essential to ensuring City facilities are sustainable and can accommodate potential growth. Additionally, diversifying the housing stock is crucial to meeting the needs of both current and potential residents across various life stages. Exploring housing need, availability, and future developments will enable the City to adapt to, and plan for, changes in population, demographics, and tourism, positioning the community for long-term success.

Strategic Plan Process Acknowledgements

CITY OF GALESBURG ELECTED OFFICIALS

Mayor, Peter Schwartzman
 First Ward City Council Member, Bradley Hix
 Second Ward City Council Member, Wayne Dennis
 Third Ward City Council Member, Evan Miller
 Fourth Ward City Council Member, Dwight White
 Fifth Ward City Council Member, Heather Acerra
 Sixth Ward City Council Member, Sarah Davis
 Seventh Ward City Council Member, Steve Cheesman
 City Clerk, Kelli R. Bennewitz

CITY OF GALESBURG ADMINISTRATIVE LEADERSHIP

City Manager, Eric Hanson
 Executive Assistant to the City Manager, Kristin Robinson
 Director of Public Works, Michael Doi
 Director of Finance, Jennifer O'Hern
 Director of Community Development, Steve Gugliotta
 Director of Parks and Recreation, Don Miles
 Chief of Police, Russ Idle
 Fire Chief, Randy Hovind
 Administrative Services Manager, Cathy St. George
 Human Resources Manager, Jessica Pease
 IT Manager, Orlee Lucero

CITY OF GALESBURG COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDERS

The City of Galesburg would also like to thank all the community members who participated in the stakeholder feedback phase of the process. An effective strategic plan includes feedback from stakeholders to ensure that needs and expectations are shared and understood by leaders of the organization.

Process facilitated by Northern Illinois University Center for Governmental Studies



NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

**Center for
Governmental Studies**

Outreach Engagement and Regional Development

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