



City Limits Newsletter

October 2023

Letter from Mayor Dietz



Everything you (maybe) wanted to know about grants... It's a long read, but hopefully informative.

Grants are a great way to help the city fund projects and expenses and it has been a fantastic year for Wilmington! They are typically available for many things that affect cities including police body cameras, costs to cover increased police patrols, lead water service lines replacement, connecting federal lands with bike paths, promoting Route 66...and we have all of those and more.

Grants are available through different local, county, state, regional, and federal sources as well as niche and vendor grants. With dozens of sources of grants and hundreds of items that grants can be made available for, the possibilities are near endless.

That unfortunately is also the number one problem with grants. It takes a lot of time, effort, and energy to identify projects, submit for grants, wait to hear if your project was selected (usually takes months), and then fund the project and complete it. Being a small town, we only have so much time, staff, and resources to apply for grants so we need to be very selective on what we apply for.

We also must weigh how long we can wait on grants to accomplish a project. Repaving Water Street, for example, was something I believe we could have got grant funding for much like the Village of Coal City did with Broadway Street. That project, however, took multiple years of applying to finally get grant funding. Repaving Water Street was a project I felt we could not put off any longer. We also would run the risk of not being awarded the grant after continuously applying.

Typically, the more funding you are looking for, the more competitive the application process is. What town wouldn't like \$2 million dollars for infrastructure improvements? Most grants also require a detailed breakdown of anticipated costs and engineering (they don't award blank checks) so typically you need to spend some time/money up-front prior to even applying. Applying for grants is competitive, and the projects are scored, the most beneficial (highest scoring) receive awards. Those who aren't selected get a nice rejection letter.

IF your project is awarded, then the time and money crunch start. Every grant has a time window to complete the project, and everything needs to be done. This means the city must stay on top of the project, vendors, and costs. Grants are typically in the form of a reimbursement of expenses. This means the city must pay out of our pockets for the project up-front, and then submit receipts to the grantor. Once the grantor receives the receipts, they will then verify the project has been completed, as awarded, and then finally submit repayment back to the city. This can often take months of having already spent the money out of our bank accounts while waiting to get repaid. That can lead to the city running out of funds, so the grant process needs to be managed very well to ensure the city is always in a good financial place.

That is where we are at today. We are at a place where we need to be fiscally responsible and ensure we have adequate funds in the bank and in reserves to pay for the grants that we have already been awarded. On that note, I am beyond thrilled to announce that Wilmington has been awarded over \$3.5 million dollars in grant funding year-to-date. Below is a quick summary of some of the grants that we have been awarded this year.

- Federal Lands Access Program – US Department of Interior - \$335,000 for the design and engineering of a bike path to connect the North Island with the Village of Elwood via IL-53 through Midewin and Abraham Lincoln Cemetery.
- ARPA Funding – Will County - \$500,000 towards a Wilmington Dam modification project
- Route 66 signage grant – IL Department of Commerce - \$45,000 for Route 66 monument and mural project.
- IL State Member Initiatives – Direct Funding - \$250,000 towards Wilmington Dam modification project
- General Revenue Fund – IL Department of Commerce - \$250,000 for operations and economic development.
- Build Illinois Fund – IL Department of Commerce - \$95,000 for relocation of South Island entrance and parking area for Route 66 Monument.
- Pavement Management Plan – Chicago Metropolitan Area Planning – 100% (minus \$3,000) of project covered.
- Powering Safe Communities – ComEd - \$3,600 towards new crosswalks across Baltimore Street
- IL Capitol Funds – Senator Joyce - \$250,000 towards capital projects
- Body Camera Grant – US Department of Justice - \$34,000 towards the purchase and ongoing storage of body cameras
- IL State Police – Safe Driving Campaign - \$5,200 towards additional police shifts
- IL Environmental Protection Agency - \$40,000 for lead service pipe replacement project

If you got your calculator out, I've only listed about \$1.8 million. I hope to share with you some additional details on the balance in the coming weeks!

On a personal note, this is a huge team win for Wilmington. This includes our City Staff, Administrator, Senator Joyce, Representative DeLuca, County Executive Bertino-Tarrant, County Board Member VanDuynes, and the Heritage Corridor team to name a few. Knowing all these people personally and being able to leverage those relationships into real dollars and real projects is amazing. We are kicking butt, cashing checks, and getting stuff done in Wilmington!



Happy Fall! Wilmington is a fantastic place to be in autumn. The leaves begin changing, the sun shines while the weather starts to turn brisk, Friday night football brings the community together and there are so many fun events and traditions to celebrate!

October brings some spook-tacular events that you don't want to miss! The [Wilmington Police Department](#) is hosting its night out on October 1 from 2 PM to 5 PM at the Wilmington High School. In the spirit of National Night Out, everyone is invited to join in on this family friendly event to support our Community and stand against crime with a Halloween Theme!

The [Wilmington Chamber of Commerce](#) is in full swing hosting the 3rd Annual Autumn Festival of Crafts on October 8. This event is from 10 AM to 4 PM at the North Island Park.

Grab a lawn chair and cozy blanket for the last movie night of the season. The [Wilmington Park District](#) presents The Addams Family at 7 PM on October 13th at North Island Park.

The Magic of Oz is coming to the South Island Park on October 15! Get ready for a spellbinding day that promises to transport you to a world over the rainbow. The [Wilmington Lions Club](#) can't wait to share this magical journey with each and every one of you. Come on out to meet Dorothy and friends from 10 AM to 3 PM.

The North Island Park transforms into the scariest place in town as the [Wilmington Lions Club](#) hosts its annual Spook Hike on October 20 & 21 from 7 PM to 10 PM.

Plan for an afternoon of fun, free, family friendly Halloween Trunk or Treat hosted by the [Wilmington Park District](#) on North Water Street from noon to 3:00 p.m. Enjoy the day filled with music, food, face painting & more!

Witches & Wine will flood North Water Street thanks to the [Wilmington Downtown Merchants](#) on October 21. Spend the evening strolling through downtown Wilmington stopping at 15 different merchants, each featuring wine tasting, appetizers and treats. Ticket are available for purchase at The Blue Horse Wine and Martini Bar.

More to come in November... Chamber of Commerce Holiday Parade, Wilmington Park District Christkindl Market, Wilmington Lions Club Christmas Walk!

Halloween is fast approaching! Trick or Treating in Wilmington will be held on October 31st from 4:30pm to 7:30pm... Here are some friendly safety tips parents and children can follow to help keep everyone safe while enjoying the festivities.



1. Trick-or-treaters need to see and be seen.
 - Use face makeup instead of masks which make seeing difficult.
 - Give trick-or-treaters a flashlight to light their way.
 - Add reflective tape to costumes and trick-or-treat bags.
 - Have everyone wear light-colored clothing.
2. Make sure adults know where the kids are going. A parent or responsible adult should accompany young children door-to-door.
3. Walk, don't run.
4. Only visit homes that have a porch light on. Accept treats at the door – never go inside.
3. Walk only on the sidewalks, not in the street.
 - If no sidewalk is available, walk at the edge of the roadway, facing traffic.
 - Look both ways before crossing the street, and cross only at the corner.
 - Don't cut across yards or use alleys.
 - Don't cross between parked cars.
 - Drivers – use extra caution. The youngsters may forget to look both ways before crossing.
4. A grown-up should check the goodies before eating.
5. If you are planning to welcome trick-or-treaters to your home, follow these safety steps:
 - Light the area well so young visitors can see.
 - Sweep leaves from your sidewalks and steps.
 - Clear your porch or front yard of obstacles someone could trip over.

Thank You to Adopt-A-Highway Participant



The Public Works Department provides support to organizations that have adopted well-traveled, very visible roadways under the City's Adopt-A-Highway program.

The City extends grateful appreciation to the Wesley 4-H Hustlers for completing clean-up along their section of roadway on North Kankakee Street.

The City of Wilmington has a formal program where individuals or service organizations can help keep our community clean by collecting trash and litter along certain highways or streets. The sponsors can adopt a section of a street and are expected to pick up trash and litter four times a year. The City will purchase and install signage along the street identifying the organization and provide trash disposal.

If your group needs additional information or is interested in "Adopting" a section of roadway, please contact the Public Works Director at (815) 476-3104.

Happy Workaversary!!

October

Anthony Ritz	7 years
Philip Lusson	5 years
Steven Luhrsen	4 years
Nancy Gross	1 year
Joey Crist	1 year
Hunter Imhof	1 year

Other Important Info

Electronic Recycling is held each month on the second Thursday from 5pm to 7pm at City Hall in the front parking lot.

2023 Golf Cart Stickers are available for purchase. Applications are available at City Hall or online.

Meeting Calendar

October 3 - 7:00 PM
City Council

October 5 - 5:00 PM
Planning & Zoning

October 10 - 5:30 PM
Committee of the Whole

October 17 - 6:30 PM
Finance, Admin, Land Acq

October 17 - 7:00 PM
City Council

Elected Officials Contacts

Mayor

Ben Dietz
bdietz@wilmington-il.com

1st Ward

Kevin Kirwin
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Ryan Jeffries
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2nd Ward

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Ryan Knight
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3rd Ward

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Leslie Allred
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4th Ward

Thomas Smith
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Todd Holmes
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Employee Spotlight Samantha Sullivan

What is your role at the City? How long have you been with the City and what position did you start at? ***I am currently the Detective Sergeant. I have been with Wilmington for a little over seven years!***

If you could switch your job with anyone else within the City, whose job would you want? ***Someone at the fire department. Good food AND naps sounds like a great work day.***

What is on your wish list for the next 5 years with the City? ***Get the PD fully staffed so we can keep up with the growth our community is experiencing.***

If you could have an unlimited supply of one thing, what would it be? ***Good health.***

What is your favorite aspect of your job? ***I enjoy working with Ofc. Kerr developing firearms training and Rescue Task Force drills.***

What has been your favorite project that you worked on here at the City? ***Two of the cases I have worked with federal agencies to bring charges on subjects who committed crimes against children.***

Three words that best describe you? ***Perseverant. Dedicated. Honest.***

People would be surprised if they knew what about you or what's your secret talent that no one knows about? ***If I ever win the lottery I plan to quit my job and spend all of my time looking for Big Foot.***

