



# Silvis News

## State Of The City Address

As we take a moment to reflect on the past year, it's clear that the City of Silvis has been on an upward trajectory of promising economic growth. This growth is a testament to the resilience and dedication of our community and city leaders. To touch on a few recent highlights, phase one of a cannabis grow facility was completed, and production has started. Two more phases of this facility are expected to be completed by the end of this year, with an anticipated job growth of 80 new jobs. Railroading Heritage of Midwest America continues to add jobs at the former Rock Island Lines rail yard. It will soon become a significant tourist designation for railroad enthusiasts. Silvis is seeking a transportation study grant to study traffic flow in and out of the facility. This study will also connect our downtown business to the rail yard. We have recently welcomed Five Below (a national retail chain) to the HyVee shopping center. Soon to open will be a wood fire pizzeria and brewery known as Punk Rock Pizza. The location of this new establishment is where Sluggers Pizza was once located on 1st Street. Despite our challenges, Silvis persevered, emerging stronger than ever. The most encouraging aspect of this growth has been the increase in new business development within our city limits. We've seen a surge of small business entrepreneurs and well-established businesses choosing to invest in our community. This trend speaks to the attractiveness of Silvis as a place to do business and promises future prosperity for all who call our city home. Looking ahead, the future of our city's economy appears incredibly promising. With infrastructure projects on the horizon and our unwavering commitment to supporting business growth, Silvis has been

positioned for sustainable economic prosperity for years to come. The City Council passed a budget of \$19,303,536 for the 2024-2025 fiscal year. This year's budget was difficult to achieve. The 2024-2025 saw a 13% budget increase over last year. The Council voted to lower the property tax rate from 1.6160 to 1.5997 for 2024-2025 to offset property tax increases through valuation reassessments for the 2024-2025 calendar year. The city's debt ratio is considered to be low to moderate, with additional bonding capabilities for future capital improvement projects such as roads, sewer, and water improvements. Silvis carries a current bond rating of A+. Sales tax jumped approximately 11% for the 2023-2024 fiscal year, which indicates a solid and healthy retail climate within Silvis. The Public Works Department continues to push forward by completing the Phipps Prairie Park ADA-accessible walking path. A \$97,000 grant was awarded to Silvis by the Illinois Natural Resources Program. Another completed grant project was the \$451,898.00 road replacement of 14th Street. While the upgrades and painting of the popular pickleball courts at Schadt Park was completed as well. The city also upgraded our monitoring system for our water distribution plants and purchased new meter reader software. This will cut the time to the reading of our water meters from three weeks to only a few days. The Public Works Department can now conduct an in-house test for a CDL driver's license, which has a cost savings of about \$5000 per employee. The goal of this program is to have every employee in the Public Works department receive their CDL driver's license by September 2024. The most significant change in 2023 was the water supply on the

high side of the water grid (south of 7th Avenue). We partnered with the City of Moline to supply one of the best and softest drinking water solutions in the area. We achieved this by not raising water rates. The city received the American Public Works Association, (Illinois Chapter) Public Works Project of The Year award. This was due to the switching of water sources in 2023. We will continue to look into the future for ways to change the primary water source on the low side (north of 7th Avenue). Our Water Department has examined 100% of all possible led water services in 2023. Two new housing projects continue at Porter Farms. A \$27 million office expansion, and a \$9 million dollar shop addition were also started in 2023 at John Deere Product Engineering in Silvis. The Police Department continues to be fully staffed with police officers, with an average call volume of 1.40 calls for service per hour. The department installed license plate recognition cameras (LPR) at nearly every entrance to our city and completed the P25 radio communication system. Upgraded desktop and in-car computers were installed along with expanded training programs to include certifying our current officers to teach training mandates in 2023. The Fire Department responded to 262 calls, up 9.6% over 2022. The department is currently reviewing data from a study, looking for ways to respond to major EMS calls, and assisting Illini EMS Services.

In closing, I want to express my gratitude to every community member. Your hard work, creativity, and passion are the driving forces behind our progress.

**Mayor Matt Carter**