



## Slinger “State of the Village”

January 2026

Communication has been a top priority of mine, and in a continued effort to be transparent I’m once again happy to offer you my annual “State of the Village” address.

As of the latest census, our population is just shy of 6700 and our residential growth has increased by more than 26% in the last 10 years. Percentage wise, the Village of Slinger continues to be the fastest growing community in Washington County.

Our net new construction in 2025 was at a healthy and manageable 2.35%. The average over the last 10 years has been 3.26% per year.

Per the US Census data that was last collected in 2019, Slingers’ average household median income was \$78,387 while the state average was \$61,747.

I am proud to say that Slingers’ equalized value is now at 1.15 Billion, which is a 9% increase from last year. When I took on the role of Village President in 2021, we were at \$681,506,400. That is a remarkable 68% increase in the Village’s overall value.

Our current Moody’s rating, which is like a “credit score” for municipalities, remains at “A-1.”

Our debt ratio is 43% of the maximum allowed.

Although much lower than the prior year, Slinger residents saw an increase on their 2025 property tax bill. Our current projections show two more years of increases, then a plateau and ultimately a decrease should begin. The overall focus of previous boards had been on decreasing services along with pushing off needed improvements to roadways, infrastructure and municipal buildings, in order to reduce property taxes. I along with the current board agree that this was not a sustainable path, thus the decision was made to create a plan to fund these necessary projects, for the long-term health and prosperity of the Village and its future generations.

In 2008, the median home value in Slinger was \$208,900 vs. \$400,000 today. In 2008, the “average” Village portion of the property tax bill was \$1,511 compared to \$2,236 now. If averaged out, that has been an increase of \$40 a year.

Comparing Mill Rates with surrounding Villages and Cities in Washington County, Slinger is one of the lowest at 5.59%. To help put this in perspective, in 2010, our Mill Rate was a whopping 11.74%.

## TID districts

A “TID” is a “Tax Incremental District” which is a tool a municipality can use to encourage economic development in a targeted area.

Basically, the property taxes collected within that district stay within that district for a period of time to help fund its development.

The State sets a cap of 12% of Equalized Value for the total of TID districts allowed within a community. Slinger is at a modest 4.91%, which is a very conservative number, with plenty of capacity if needed.

Our newest TID, Merchant Village, is located on the SW corner of Interstate 41 and State Hwy 60. All infrastructure has been installed, and in the fall of 2025, we celebrated the grand opening of The Fireside Market. Several additional businesses are currently in discussions to build within Merchant Village and as more information is available, it will be shared with you.

Ultimately, when this district is complete, it will add over 75 million dollars of equalized value to our Village along with goods, services, jobs and additional tax base.

## Our Downtown

Just prior to me being elected, the Village Board re-established our Redevelopment Authority (RDA). The focus of this committee is to establish policies meant to enhance our downtown area. Since then, we have offered assistance to residents and businesses to help improve their properties. Here is a short list of some of our accomplishments:

- The purchase of the historic train depot that now houses our museum, which is also getting ready to go through a large *privately funded* expansion in 2026
- The completion of the residential neighborhood, Seventh Hill Estates
- Opening of “Little Sweetz” ice cream shop
- The purchase and removal of the old funeral home and now the construction of new residential buildings which will also include commercial spaces and 11 additional street parking spots
- The removal of the dilapidated and unsafe “Creamery” building which was located at the corner of Kettle Moraine Dr and Stork St.
- As a reminder, the RDA does have grant and loan programs available

## Our Police Department

Safety is one of the highest ranked factors as to why individuals continue to move into our great community.

With that, Slinger’s location in Washington County with our highly traveled State roads, can be a blessing and at times, a curse. And because of this, a lot of officer time is spent on incidents revolving around these State roads.

As our community grows, we have a duty to make sure that our citizens and businesses are well served and protected. Our current PD, which is within our Village Hall building, has more than outgrown its space. Built 25 years ago, the PD’s current space was

originally intended to be a temporary place holder for 10–15-years. As announced two years ago, and after more than ten years of discussion, debate and the comprehensive studies of all our municipal building needs, our board of Trustees decided to move forward with a much-needed new Police Department that will serve our community for the next 50 plus years.

This state-of-the-art building, which will encompass the latest technology, equipment, and space in order to help our officers effectively manage our safety, is currently being constructed on an 8-acre parcel on Enterprise Dr, just South of Uptown Motors. This location will provide our police officers fast and efficient access to 175, 60 & 164. When complete, this building will definitely be something our community will be proud of.

A strong, vibrant, and safe community all lead to productivity and increased property values. I, along with your board of Trustees, look at this new facility as an investment in our community.

Construction is scheduled to be completed late this summer.

#### Village Hall, Library & New Community Center

Once the Police Department is complete, we will begin the process of converting the current Village Hall/PD building into an expanded library which will offer so much more to our community including additional technology, study and programing spaces for all age groups. The Village Hall will then be relocated to the space which is now occupied by the library. In addition, a committee has been formed to raise private funding to construct a Community Center which will connect these two buildings and contain various meeting rooms which will be available, free of charge, to Slinger residents and businesses. Detailed information about this project along with floor plans, a digital fly-thru and opportunities to get involved can be found at [www.slingerlibrary.org](http://www.slingerlibrary.org) . Once there, click on the “Slinger Campus Project” link located towards the top of the screen.

#### Slinger Fire Department

Our highly respected Fire Department is actually a privately owned organization and not a direct function of the Village. In addition, this group of brave men and women who are on-call 24-7, are all volunteers. Their funding comes via a contract with the Village.

I have had the great privilege of getting to know these individuals over the last 5 years and cannot say enough about their commitment to service. We are extremely lucky to have this group watching over us.

To emphasize what they do as volunteers for our community, here’s a look at just some of their remarkable 2025 numbers:

- 4,845 Training Hours
- 1,289 Fire Inspections
- 225 Emergency calls for a total of 4,002 on-scene hours
- 16.59 Members were on site per emergency call
- 39 EMS Assists
- 8 New Members for a total of 48 Volunteers

A big thank you to the Slinger Fire Department!

As I have continually repeated over the years, Interstate 41 along with Hwy's 60, 164 & 175 are all State roads that pass through our Village and are under the jurisdiction of the State DOT, NOT the Village.

Although we have a good working relationship with the DOT, ultimately all final decisions regarding funding, rebuilding, redesigning, resurfacing, turn lanes, traffic signals, crosswalks, sidewalks, pathways, etc., including timelines (that continually change) are at their sole discretion.

The DOT website is currently showing the following daily traffic counts: At the underpass at 41 & 60, more than 40,000 and on Hwy 60 between 164 & 175, it is in excess of 20,000.

Here are some of latest updates on those State roads:

- The traffic signals that were installed on 60 at the entrance to Merchant Village have already been proven to slow traffic and reduce accidents
- The "off" and "on" ramps at 41 & 60 are scheduled to be rebuilt this spring. In addition, traffic signals will be installed
- The intersection at 60 & 164 (by Kwik Trip) will be rebuilt with the addition of turn lanes and new traffic signals. This is currently scheduled to take place sometime in 2027
- In 2027, the DOT will also be resurfacing Hwy 60 from Wayside Drive on the east side of Hartford all the way to I-41 and replacing all the traffic signals along this route. Additional sidewalks and trails will be installed that will expand our current pedestrian and biking network along with continuing the pathway we left off with at Parkway Drive on the north side of STH 60, extending it to Kettle View Court/CTH CC, where the Ice Age Trail crosses 60, continuing towards Pike Lake. Finally, a new sidewalk will be added on the south side of 60, from Industrial Drive (the street between Roland Machinery and Crash Champions) to the Merchant Village development by 41.
- In 2029 there will be a total replacement of 175 from Hwy 60 North to St. Lawrence. This project will also include the removal of the double-lanes from Oakview to Beine and create a "road diet" also known as a "TWTL" (two-way turn lane), which is basically a large center strip that will allow for safer turning off of 175 and include bolder crosswalks to make them more visible and safer for pedestrians.
  - o We are also working on negotiating a multi-use path from just North of our downtown area along 175. This would start at Maple and head North over the bridge. From there, the Village would create an adjoining path that will connect to Breuer Park.
- As for the old wood bridge on Arthur Rd., the design stage has been completed and it is scheduled to be rebuilt, with the use of State & Federal grants along with a contribution from the CN Railroad, sometime in 2029.

I would like to share some of the various Village department accomplishments that took place in 2025 along with a few of their 2026 Goals:

### Administration

- In 2025
  - In December we hired Dyann Benson as our new Assistant Administrator, Community Development Director and full time Planner. She comes to us with more than 20+ years of experience in Planning, Zoning & Economic Development. Her position will most definitely help the Village identify opportunities and manage growth in a well thought out manner.
- 2026 Goals
  - We will be applying for a “Small Business Development Grant” from WEDC to be used towards the creation and funding of things like, advertising and marketing for “retail pitches” to potential businesses to set up shop here in the Village along with establishing “Financial Incentive Programs” for existing businesses to refine or improve their spaces
  - Meet with local businesses to get a better understanding of their needs and concerns and share various opportunities they may be unaware of
  - Help foster development within “Merchant Village”
  - Revisit and update our Zoning Codes and Ordinances
  - Create a walking/biking tour of historic buildings and points of interest within the Village
  - The implementation of a Village “app” which will allow quick and efficient access to Village information along with instant communication of important information to our citizens.

### Police Department

- In 2025
  - Brought the D.A.R.E. program back into our schools
  - Created a Public Safety Cadet Unit
  - Became an Internet Crimes Against Children “ICAC” affiliated agency
  - Established a Bicycle Patrol Unit
  - Provided staff with over 1,600 hours of law enforcement training
  - Began construction of the new Police Department
- 2026 Goals
  - Complete and transition into the new Police Department facility
  - Continue to participate in community events throughout the Village
  - Fill two currently open Police Officer positions
  - Upgrade in-car squad cameras
  - Replace department firearms

I would also like to congratulate our Police Chief Kyle Arendt for being accepted into the FBI Academy. This is a highly sought-after opportunity that only a few Police Chiefs Nationwide, in any given year, are offered to attend. Taking place in Washington D.C., the information and training he will obtain during this three-month training program will ultimately be a tremendous benefit to the Village of Slinger.

## Parks and Rec

- In 2025
  - o They received a \$16,535 Urban Forestry Grant
  - o Updated the Village Tree Inventory
  - o With nearly the same amount of staffing as previous years, they were able to handle more than doubling our park rentals/tournaments
  - o Updated the concession payment process to now accept credit card payments
  - o Created three new community events: “Breuer Family Fun Day,” “Slinger Trails and Cheers” and “Trails of Treats” at Breuer Park
  - o Increased a wide variety of programs for all ages, including new outdoor recreation programs
- 2026 Goals
  - o Improve concession stand operations
  - o Take over concessions at Community Park, after having leased it out over the past 5 years
  - o Enhance the “Sports Key” management software to streamline booking and scheduling processes for a more user-friendly experience
  - o Grow senior program participation by expending outreach efforts, refining current programs and increasing engagement within the senior community
  - o Update our 5-year park and open space plan
  - o Complete a forestry procedure manual

## Public Works

- In 2025
  - o Reconstructed Timberline Dr., Ellys Way, Beaus Bay, Nordic Court, Water Street and Hartford Street by the School.
  - o General Village wide road maintenance consisting of crack filling and correction of depressions near manholes and water valves
  - o Completed rehabilitation of the retention ponds in the Sherman Heights subdivision
  - o Managed the Village’s first ever Bulk Garbage Disposal event
  - o Took delivery of a new chipper and installed a new style cutting edge on our tandem plow which is more durable and reduces damage to manholes and other structures in the roadways
  - o Pruned all trees within the Alps subdivision
  - o Removed the old guard rail along the walking path at Fireman’s Park and replaced it with a wooden decorative fence that was reused from a former project
- 2026 Goals
  - o Reconstruct Chestnut Street and Water Street (both of these from Kettle Moraine Drive South to Elm) and Elm Street to Water Street
  - o Implement the newly acquired winter weather prediction and monitoring system to better our winter road maintenance practices
  - o Utilize our newly acquired concrete grinder to repair multiple sidewalk trip hazards

Utilities

- In 2025
  - o They completed the Water Street watermain relay from Elm to the High School
  - o Completed the Park Ave watermain relay
  - o Completed new Well #7 located at Breuer Park
  - o 98% of all water meters were replaced
  - o Completed a sewer relay for W. Washington (from Eiche Dr. west to Maple Ave and South on Maple to Park)
  - o Repaired sewer manholes along Timberline Dr., Nordic Ct., Elly's Way and Beau's Bay
  - o Completed the necessary infrastructure in the Cedar Ridge Estates subdivision
  - o Cleaned and televised 1/7<sup>th</sup> of our sanitary sewer lines
- 2026 Goals
  - o Complete the remaining AMI water meter replacements
  - o Design, bid and construct the water main relay along Hwy 60 from Kettle Moraine Drive, West to 120 W. Commerce Blvd.
  - o Drain and inspect Well #3 reservoir
  - o Complete the new 5-year WDNR permit process for the WWTP
  - o Rebuild aerator drive #3 on the oxidation ditch
  - o Complete sewer capacity study for the Cedar Bluffs and American Eagle lift stations
  - o Design and bid sewer main on Scenic Ave to eliminate current sewer lines that are located in backyards of properties that have a history of backups.

Electric Service Update

Most of the Village is served by our private electric utility in conjunction with WPPI and has consistently been more reliable and less expensive than those using WE Energies. Although we will be going through a rate case study this coming year, in 2025 the residents of Slinger that are on our WPPI service, had an average savings of 48.62% verses those on WE Energies and our commercial users, on average, saved 26.10%.

As WE Energies allows, we will continue to expand our private electric utility service areas, and eventually hope to negotiate the purchase of electric service to the neighborhoods of Bayberry, Scenic Moraine Park, and Speedway Ct.

Storm Water

In 2025, Southeastern Wisconsin experienced one of the worst flooding episodes on record, affecting thousands of properties, including many within Washington County. The images provided throughout the various media outlets showed how devastating this event truly was. Due to years of planning and implementation of storm water systems and maintenance, the Village of Slinger was not affected. Just another example of how investing in proactive measures is far less expensive in the long run than having to be reactive.

On behalf of the Village residents, I would like to personally thank all the past and present elected officials, department heads and employees for their foresight, planning and continued effort in this area. Their time and ingenuity along with the financial investment the board provided definitely paid off, and with large dividends.

### Slinger School District

Although Village government does not have any direct involvement with school operations or results, we have an open line of communication with school officials regarding items from general safety to Village growth and its potential effect on enrollment. Regarding any concerns about our growth and its impact on our school district, school administration has assured me that they are in great shape. As a matter of fact, approximately 1/6<sup>th</sup> of our students are actually open enrolled.

Over the last 4 years, student count has been down. If and when students within our district climb, the school district will be able to dial back open enrollment to accommodate their space needs for many years to come.

I would like to take a moment to congratulate our School District for currently being ranked within the top 10 in Wisconsin and to Slinger High School for receiving a "DPI Level 1 Pacesetter Award." One of only 28 High Schools in the entire State to achieve this!

For those residents that may not have children in our school system, the success of our Schools and the quality of education provided to our youth has a direct impact on our community and overall property values. I have the utmost respect for our school board, administration, teachers, staff, parents, and students. Their commitment to a high-quality level of education helps make Slinger one of the best places to live, work and raise our families. I also assure you that my continued commitment to working side by side with them, to meet their needs, is a top priority.

### Commerce

Thank you to all the businesses that have made an investment in our community. In addition, here are a few "shout outs" and notes of interest:

- In 2025 we welcomed "The Fireside Market" along with "Little Sweetz" ice cream shop into town
- The major expansion and remodeling of "The Kettle" along with the addition of Jugs Restaurant
- The expansion of "Sippie Hippie" Coffee House, Café & Cocktail Lounge
- The re-opening of "The Carriage House" and "Slinger House," both under new management
- This coming summer, Slinger will finally have an "official" Farmers Market! It will be held on Sunday mornings, June through October, and will be located at the side parking lot of Sippie Hippie, which is at the corner of 175 and Slinger Rd.
- Although founded in 1988, this year, "Advanced Wildlife Control" is celebrating their 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary in the Village
- Daily Dose also marks their 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary as well
- "Friends of Nature" will be celebrating their 25th anniversary
- E.H. Wolf is celebrating their 85<sup>th</sup> anniversary

- And founded in 1886 by Adam Held, Held's is celebrating their 140<sup>th</sup> anniversary! They have been at their current location since 1995.

### Final Thoughts

A special thank you to my family. Your support in allowing me to serve our community and the stress that sometimes goes with that responsibility has been appreciated.

To our current Board of Trustees (Dean Otte, Jeff Behrend, Lee Fredricks, Marlyss Thiel, Bob Neidinger & Jake Bergum) along with all those that serve on our various committees, thank you. The time and passion you all provide Slinger with to assure our success as a community is truly remarkable.

In addition, we have the best department heads, staff, and employees I have ever come to know; all hard-working individuals who truly show their pride in what they do. They are in fact the "engine" that keeps this Village running as efficiently as it does.

Over the last 5 years, I have continually said, and will say again and again, each and every year, our Village Administrator Margaret Wilber has been a phenomenal asset to this community. Her thorough understanding of government, steady and reliable leadership, highest level of professionalism, and overall guidance has made my job a lot easier. On behalf of the entire community, thank you, Margaret.

And finally, to the residents of Slinger, please know how honored I am to represent you. Together, we have made so many great strides in the last 5 years and I truly believe the best is yet to come. Being a part of a team that has a united vision which is focused on building a strong, safe, prosperous and desirable community that we and future generations will remain proud of is truly inspiring.

With your continued support, trust and confidence, we will continue "Moving Slinger Forward, Together."

Thank you.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Scott Stortz". The signature is stylized and written in cursive.

Scott Stortz, Slinger Village President

January 14, 2026