



ROCK ISLAND  
ILLINOIS

WELCOME TO THE 2026  
**STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS**



Mayor Ashley Harris  
January 29, 2026

# City Council



# Department Directors

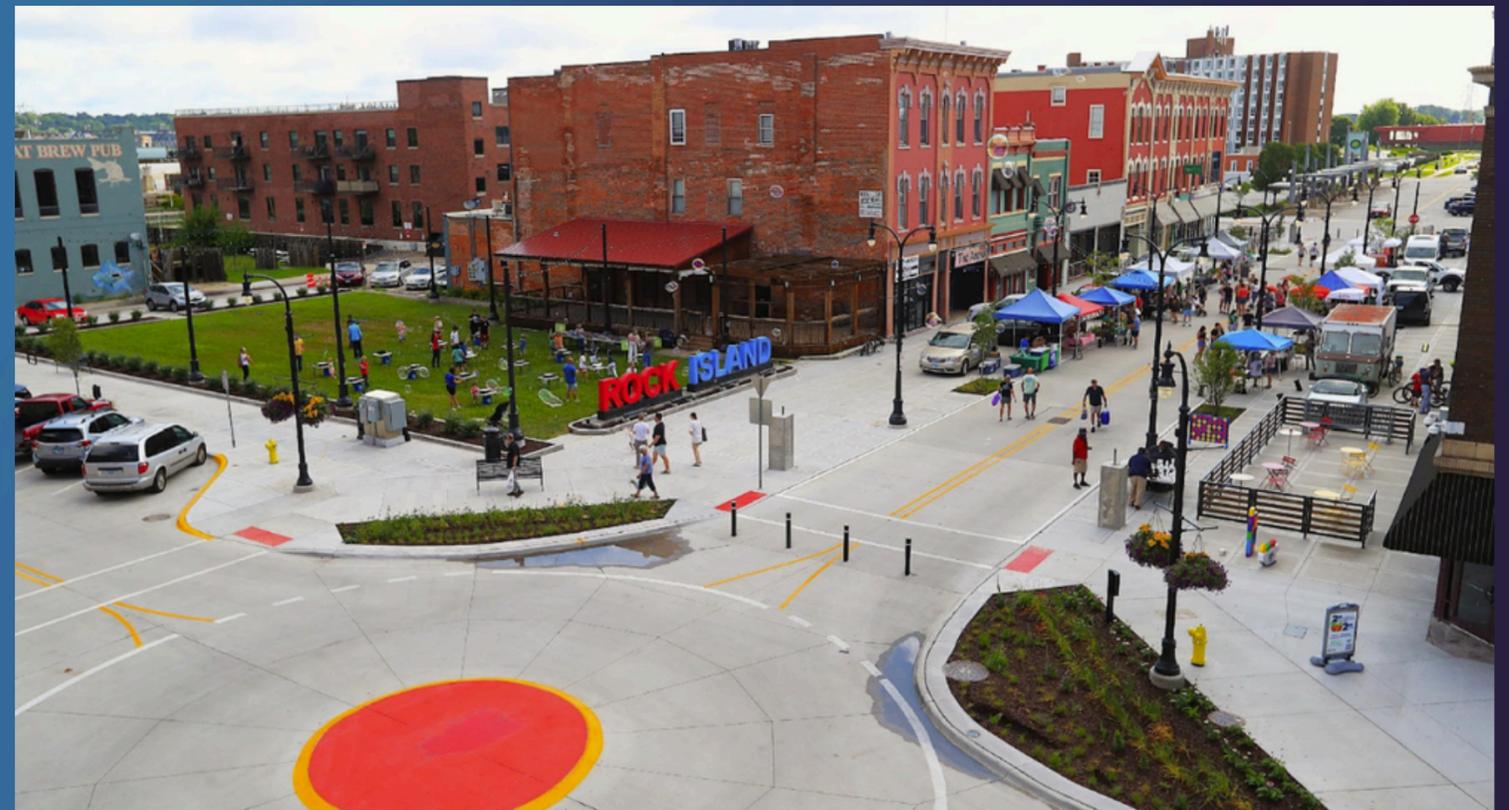


# COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY

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We show our *Commitment to Community* by providing:

- Fiscal Responsibility
- Balanced Economic Development
- Excellent Services & Amenities
- Public Safety



# Fiscal Responsibility

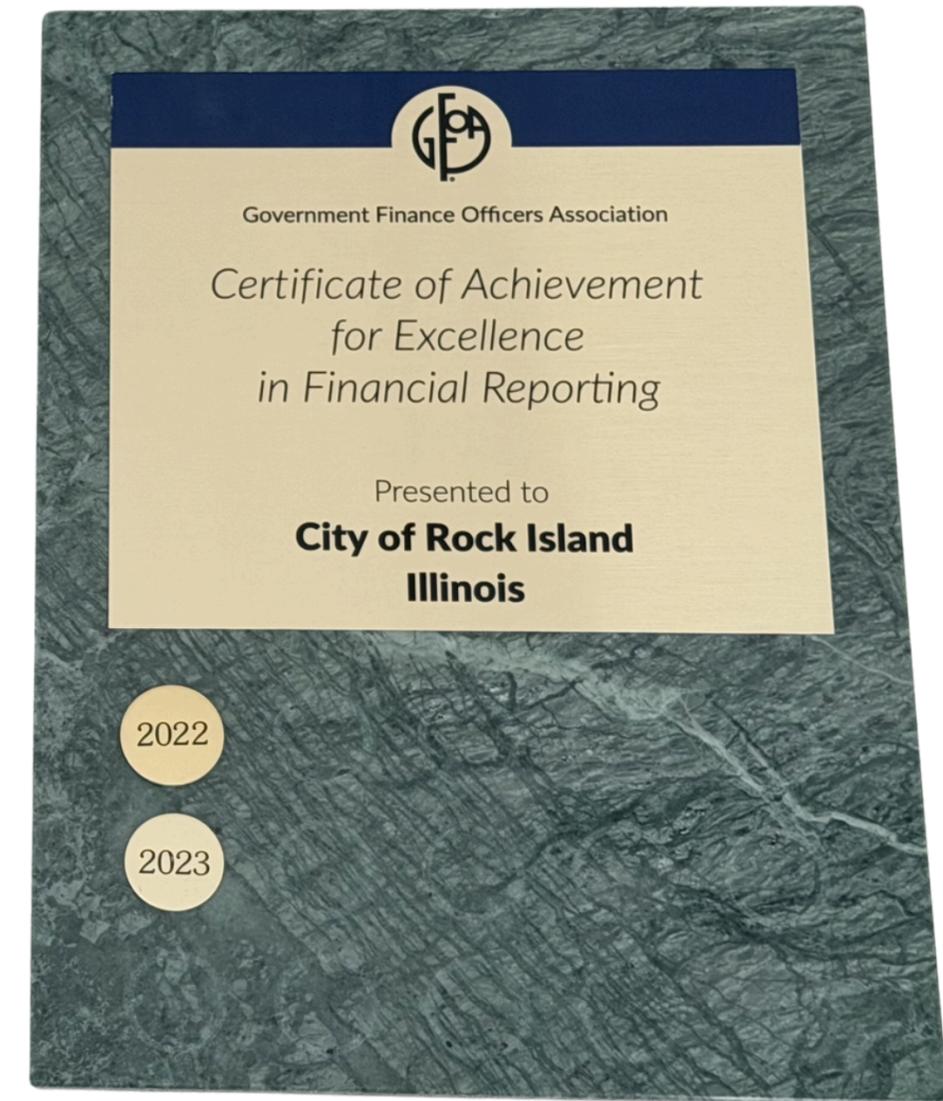


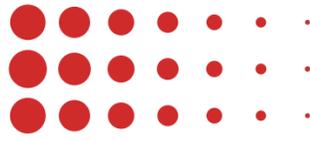
- ✓ **Maintain high level of services across all departments despite rising costs and budget cuts**
- ✓ **Implemented a local 1% grocery tax to prevent loss of \$1 million in revenue after the State eliminated the tax**
- ✓ **The City's property tax rate for 2026 is 2.77 or \$757 for every \$100,000**
- ✓ **S&P Global = A+ rating**
- ✓ **Moody's = A3 rating, Positive Outlook**

## *2026 Budget Highlights*

- Council passed \$154 Million budget
- Expenditures dropped by \$14.3 million from 2025
- 90 day reserves of \$13 million
- Property tax levy of \$18.7 million
- Although Rock Island County EAV increased 6.25%, the City's property tax levy was passed, keeping the property tax rate flat.

**The City of Rock Island has been the recipient of the Government Finance Officers' Association (GFOA) Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for 43 consecutive years (1981-2024).**





# Transparency

- ✓ **322 Freedom of Information Act requests processed**
- ✓ **Average response time was 2 to 3 days**
- ✓ **300 Licenses/Permits were issued, almost double from 2023**
- ✓ **10 Ordinances were published**
- ✓ **New City Clerk Amanda Torres sworn in Jan. 26**



# Balanced Economic Development

- ✓ Nine businesses openings or expansions
- ✓ Nine development agreements totaling nearly \$60 million
- ✓ River Edge Redevelopment Zone approval
- ✓ Rock Island Port District Master Plan underway





# Completion of the \$9 million Rebuild Downtown Rock Island Project

- \$3 million from a State of Illinois Rebuild Downtowns & Main Streets Grant
- \$3.9 million in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds
- \$1.5 million in Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District funds
- \$267,000 State of Illinois Tourism Attractions Grant



# Enhanced Placemaking: **Rock** Island Block Letters

In partnership with the Rock Island Downtown Alliance, the City held a photo contest to promote the new Rock Island block letters.





ROCK

ISLAND

A man in a dark suit and tie stands in the center of the square.

BLUE CAT BREW PUB

electric

# ROCK ISLAND

downtown alliance

A joint effort  
between the  
public and  
private sectors to  
strengthen  
livability and  
quality of place  
in Downtown  
Rock Island.

**2025 WINS**

# PARTNERSHIPS MAKE ALL THE DIFFERENCE





**Rebuild Downtown Construction, Summer 2024**



**Rebuild Downtown Project Completed, Summer 2025**



## 2025 Ambassador Highlights

- **1,603** visitor greetings
- **1,066** trash cans serviced/cleaned
- **985** trash bags of litter filled
- **694** block faces snowplowed/weeded
- **629** street outreach encounters



1 of 43 capital improvement projects  
facilitated by the Downtown Alliance  
in partnership with the City to assist  
business and building owners.



**Before**

By end of 2025, these 43 projects totaled more than \$150,000 in planned public-private investments.



After



1 of 10 New Business Sidewalk Patios: Soi 2, Summer 2025



1 of 8 New Downtown Businesses: Bev's Yarn Barn, Fall 2025



1 of 2 New Murals: Skellington Manor, Alternating Currents 2025



**Arts Alley Activated, Alternating Currents 2025**



**2<sup>nd</sup> Saturdays on 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave., Summer 2025**



 **FLAHERTY'S**  
The IRISH CANDY Company  
[WWW.FLAHERTYSCANDY.COM](http://WWW.FLAHERTYSCANDY.COM)

2<sup>nd</sup> Ave. Holiday Market, Winter 2025





downtown  
**ROCK**  
**ISLAND**



Rock Island -  
Milan School District #41

- 3% increase in graduation rate over two years
- Decreased the graduation rate gap for African American and Hispanic students
- 8% decrease in chronic absenteeism over two years
- 19% reduction in out-of-school suspensions over two years
- Five schools improved their accountability rating in 2025 on the Illinois State Report Card



# Community Development

- 1,657 building inspections completed
- 2,096 building permits issued
- 2,043 rental inspections completed
- 1,274 grass and weed citations issued
- 1,358 nuisance citations issued
- 115 properties were registered as foreclosed, vacant or abandoned
- Nearly \$500,000 in CDBG and IHDA funding was used to complete 35 housing rehabilitation projects.
- 26 zoning actions completed



# ▶▶▶▶ Excellent Services & Amenities

- A well-staffed, skilled Fire Department that answered more than 9,200 calls for service in 2025
- A Proactive Public Works Department that performed major street repairs and reconstruction; emergency sanitary, storm and water repairs; snow removal; and fleet repairs
- A Parks & Recreation Department that maintains all city properties, two golf courses, one public swimming pool and 21 parks.
- A Library Department that serves the entire community, offering creative programs, educational opportunities and endless materials ... all for free.
- A Martin Luther King Jr. Community Center that uplifts the community through day camps, educational programs and West End Revitalization.



# Rock Island Fire Department

- Five new firefighters were hired in 2025
- Firefighters clocked more than 20,000 hours of training
- Incidents: Over 9,200 calls for service in 2025, including 87 fires & 3,142 EMS/rescue
- 1,067 fire inspections were completed
- Firefighter Joel Wilford was named Firefighter of the Year by Knights of Columbus and Community Caring Conference
- TAG Communications hired for recruitment videos. Take a look!





**Jon Briggs**  
FIRE MARSHALL

[RIFireJobs.com](http://RIFireJobs.com)



RIFireJobs.com



# Public Works

- After 5-years of effort, Engineering succeeded in obtaining \$24.5 million in RAISE/BUILD Grant funds for the 11th Street/US 67 Reconstruction Project
- Fleet Services purchased 14 new vehicles, including a new fire engine and three new ambulances
- \$1.7 million in federal funding for the RI Parkway/35<sup>th</sup> Street West roundabout construction
- More than a dozen grant applications submitted for major road projects
- Major street repairs & reconstruction
- Maintenance of 51,374 linear feet of sanitary sewer mains



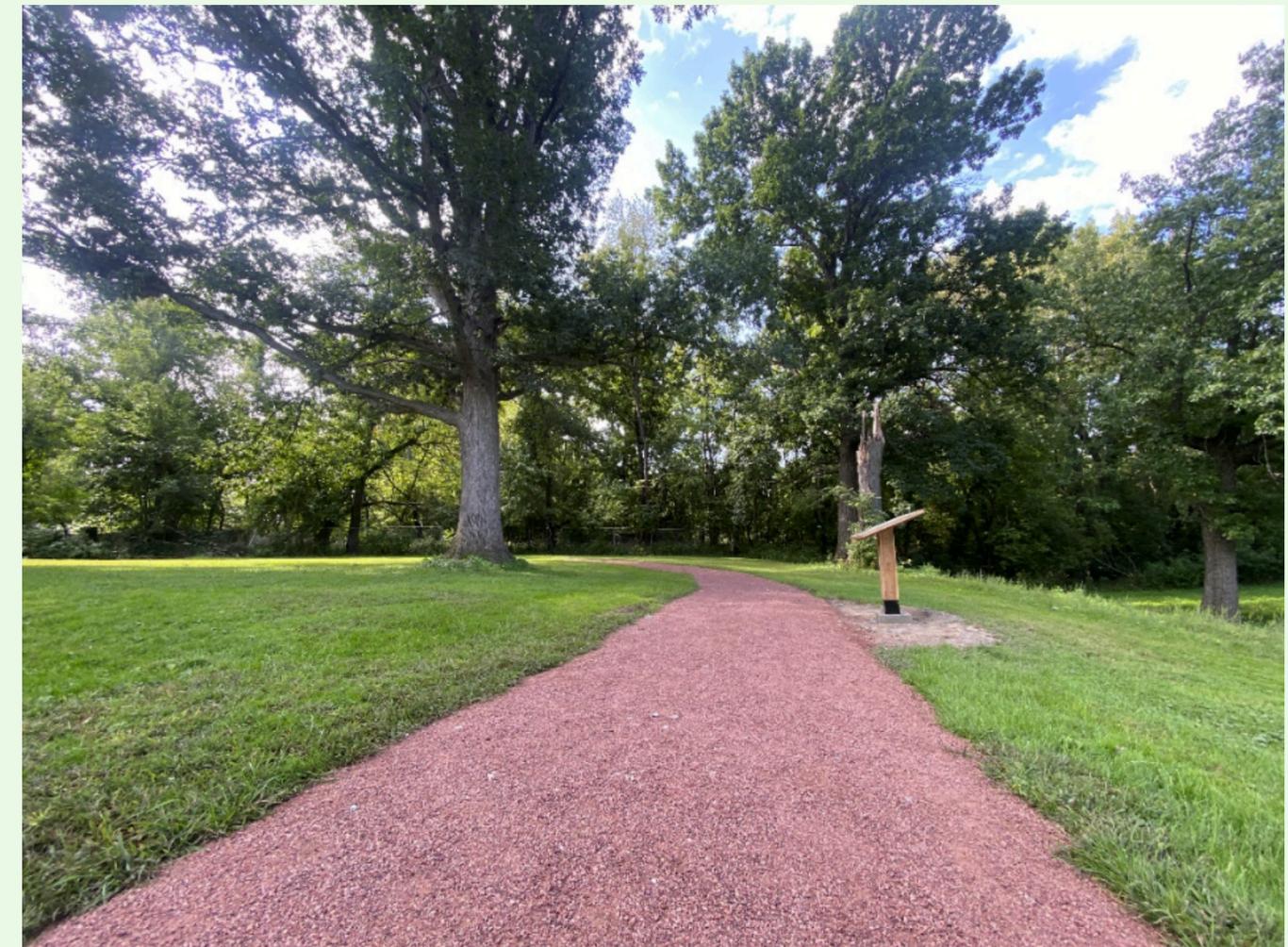
# Parks & Recreation

21 Parks

2 Golf Courses

One public swimming pool (Whitewater Junction)

One fitness Center (RIFAC)



**Hodge Park exterior walking path. This project was made possible by the Illinois Trails Grant Program.**



Sunset Park North Boat Launch  
and Parking Lot



**Refurbishment of the tennis and basketball courts at Mel McKay Park. This was made possible by a grant from the United States Tennis Association in honor of Rock Island's own, Madison Keys, winner of the 2025 Australian Open Tennis Tournament.**



# Rock Island Public Library



Eudell Watts BBQ & Books Fundraiser



"Level Up at Your Library" Summer Reading Program

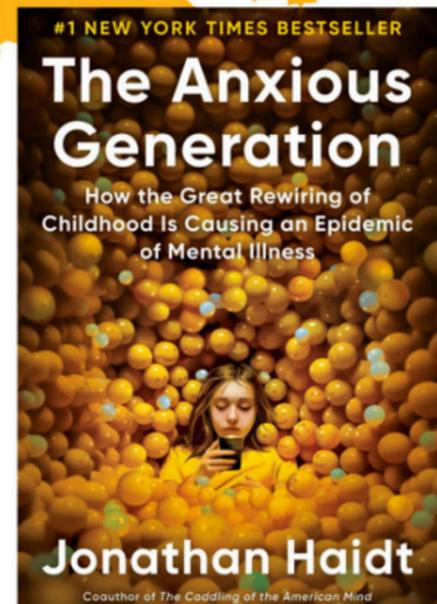
Community Partnerships





# Reading Revolution Community Book Club

We are excited to invite you to join our Reading Revolution School Community Book Club as we read and discuss the thought-provoking book *The Anxious Generation* by Jonathan Haidt.



### PICK-UP OR CHECK-OUT YOUR COPY:

June 2nd - 6th  
at each library location and the  
RIMSD 41 Administration Center

### BOOK CLUB MEETING DATES:

<b>Parts 1 &amp; 2 (Chapters 1-4)</b>	<b>Part 3 (Chapters 5-7)</b>
June 18th from 5 - 6 pm	July 9th from 1 - 2 pm
Southwest Branch	Downtown Branch
9010 Ridgewood Road	401 19th Street
Rock Island, IL 61201	Rock Island, IL 61201

**Part 4 (Chapters 8-12)**  
July 23rd from 5 - 6 pm  
Watts-Midtown Branch  
2715 30th Street  
Rock Island, IL 61201

**PD credit will be offered to certified staff who attend book discussions.**

Scan the code to explore the digital library of eBooks and eAudiobooks!



Scan the code to join the club!



The Reading Revolution School Community Book Club is a collaboration between the RIMSD41 and the Rock Island Public Library System!



## The Reading Revolution School Community Book Club





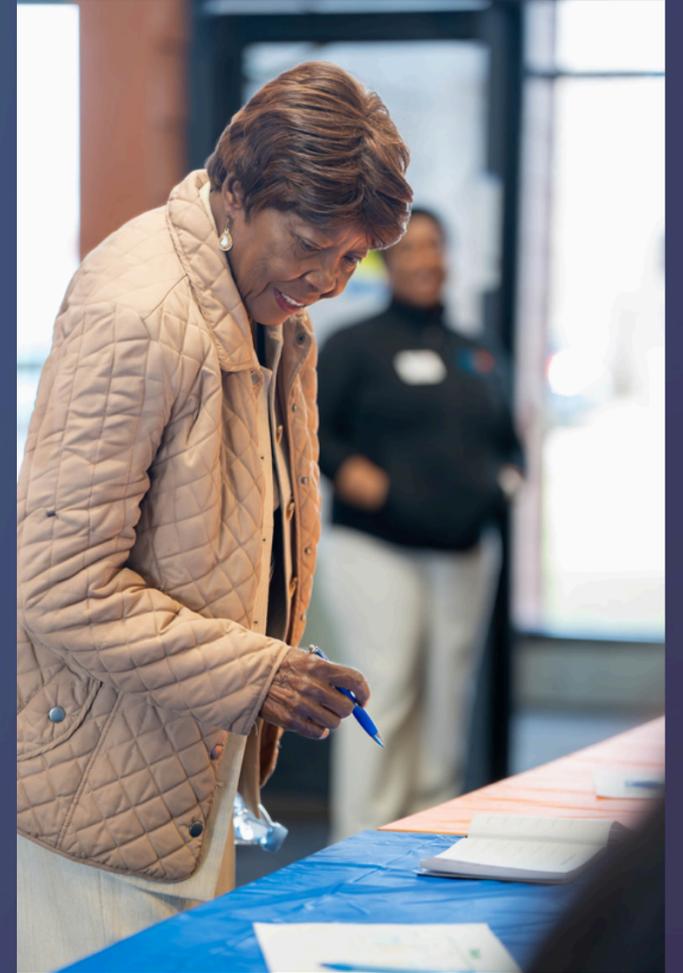


# MLK Center

Bonnie Ballard



Minnijean Brown-Trickey  
Member of the Little Rock Nine



## 50th Anniversary Celebration





»»» Soul of the City

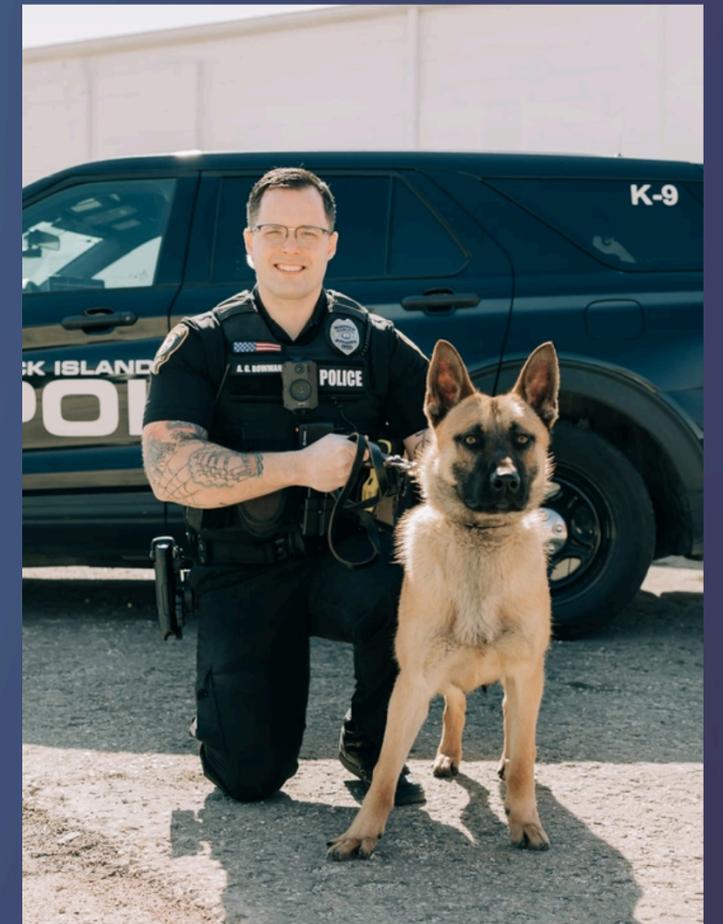
9,000 Thanksgiving meals served!



# Public Safety



- ✓ Reduction in burglaries, narcotic offenses and stolen vehicles
- ✓ Strong Community Partnerships
- ✓ Group Violence Intervention Program
- ✓ Suicide Prevention Signs



# Police Department



Sgt. Brienne Lonergan



Officer Drake Schroedert



Million Father March



Officer Spencer Brooks



Kick It with a Cop



**SKYLAR JESS**

**PATROL OFFICER**

**RIPoliceJobs.com**



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ILLINOIS

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Mayor Ashley Harris  
January 29, 2026



**RI**  
**ROCK ISLAND**  
**ILLINOIS**

**Thank You For Coming**