

HISTORY OF SAUK VILLAGE

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COPY

The Village, now known as Sauk Village, was originally known as Strassburg from 1838 to 1950. Charles Sauter, the settlement's first postmaster, named it for Strassburg, France because the first settlers to this area came from there. The first effort to incorporate Sauk Village under the name of Strassburg was discarded after the government informed officials there already was a Strassburg, Illinois. Sauk Village was named after the main street it was built around, Sauk Trail. Sauk Trail was an old indian trail used by the Sauk and Shawnee Indian Tribes until around 1870.

Sauk Village was incorporated on March 12, 1957 and consisted of fifty-five homes on approximately twelve acres located east of the Calumet Expressway and south of Sauk Trail. The first village government consisted of a Village President (Mayor), a Village Clerk and six Trustees. The first mayor was Thomas J. Nichols who served in office from 1957 to 1965. The first Village Board meeting was held in a model home on April 18, 1957.

The first police department consisted of a part-time Chief of Police (Robert Agee), who was also a foreman for Ambo I, the major developer in Sauk Village in early years, several volunteer citizens and one 1957 Ford squad car which was donated to Sauk Village by Ambo I.

The first fire department consisted of eighteen volunteers and a 1952 Chevrolet pumper fire truck which was purchased for two-hundred dollars.

The first public works department consisted of one man and one pick-up truck (his own).

The village hall offices, the police department and the fire department shared a room about the size of an average living room today.

The total assessed valuation of Sauk Village one year after its incorporation was reported at \$271,023.00. One year later new homes being built were sold for approximately \$13,000.00.

The first four years brought rapid residential growth. A special census in 1961 showed that Sauk Village had 1,258 dwellings and 5,774 residents. The land area had quadrupled. Two new public schools were built to meet the influx of school children that could not be accommodated by the 1870 built Katz Corner School.

The early and middle 1960's saw a virtual halt to new construction and existing homes were abandoned in mass. the halt in development and mass exodus was brought on largely by a severe steel works strike and extremely difficult economic times. Also, due to the cheap loans, these people had little to lose by giving up the homes and moving elsewhere.

In 1965, Roger F. Theisen was elected as Sauk Village's second mayor. Thru a combined effort of Theisen, a full time Village Administrator Ted Theodroe and the people of Sauk Village, the village was brought back to life. By 1968, new construction began, the vacant homes were reoccupied and the population began growing again. In 1970, the village had 7,500 residents. A new junior high school was built and in 1973 the Library District was formed.

The middle 1970's again brought a slowdown in new construction, but by the late 1970's and into 1980 new subdivisions were developed.

Thru these years, Sauk Village outgrew the Village Hall-Police Station located on the west side of town and in 1977 the present Municipal Building on Torrence Avenue was occupied. Expansion to the fire station, public works and water departments took place thru these years.

1977 also saw the election of a new mayor. The third and present mayor is Edward W. Paesel. This young mayor, 34 years old, has a college degree in Political Government.

1982 marks the 25th anniversary of Sauk Village. The present village boundaries stretch from US Route 30 on the north to Steger Road on the south, from the Calumet Expressway on the west to Burnham Avenue on the east. Sauk Village has approximately 3,000 homes, 11,000 residents, fifty businesses, nine churches, four public schools and three private schools.

The present village government consists of a full-time Mayor, a full-time Executive Assistant to the Mayor (appointed) a full-time Village Clerk and a ~~Part~~-time Treasurer (appointed). The Village Board still consists of six part-time elected Trustees who also serve as heads of various committees.

The present police department consists of seventeen full time employees, nine part-time employees, twelve police cadets (volunteer), a juvenile/detective division, six police squad cars and a new police station equipped with a modern crime information center, three jail cells and several closed circuit TV equipped rooms. The department patrols approximately 120,000 miles annually.

The present volunteer fire department consists of forty fully trained personnel, ten fire cadets and operates a ten-bay fire station. Their equipment includes three modern

pumpers, two expensively equipped paramedic manned ambulances, a brand new \$200,000.00 huge snorkle fire truck and several utility vehicles, The Sauk Village Fire Department today is a very highly rated organization with a reputation for being one of the best in the South Suburbia area.

The present public works department has sixteen employees and are responsible for the maintenance of more than thirty-six miles of streets, parkways, sewers and water mains. Public Works also operates a water pumphouse with two wells and a million gallon water tower to provide the village residents with water.

The demographic profile of Sauk Village has shown an even increasing population. Although it is a growing community, its average rate of growth has decreased in recent years. Forecasts prepared by the Notheastern Illinois Planning Commission (NIPC) in 1979 projected a continual increase in most communities in the Chicago Metropolitan Area. Sauk Village is expected to grow at a faster rate than many of its south suburban counterparts.

Racial distribution shows a generally homogenous community having a minority population of slightly over 1% in 1978. In 1960, there was a non-white population of 15. In 1978 the non-white population was 107. In 1982 estimates show the non-white population at slightly over 500. The racially segregated sections found in most cities and towns are virtually non-existent in Sauk Village. Racial integration covers the entire town.

Sauk Village could be characterized as a very youthful community with 75% of its resident population under twenty-five years of age. Only 1% of Sauk Village's residents are aged over sixty-five.

Industry in Sauk Village is very light. A NAPA warehouse and a Roadway Trucking Terminal make up the village's present industry. Plans are in the works to develop an Industrial Park in the northwest corner of the village. New land is being annexed for this purpose. The only block in the way of this project is the current high interest rate.

According to Sauk Village Audits, a total operating expenditure of around \$68,000 was seen for the first three years of the village's existence. Ten years later, in 1971, this figure had multiplied over seven times to nearly half a million dollars. By 1981, the operating cost of the village was over 1.5 million dollars.

A comparative study of the village's General Fund Revenue between the years of 1975 thru 1981 showed a breakdown of the income as follows;

Property taxes	21%
State Income tax	12%
Sales tax	10%
Sale of water	25%
Misc. licenses & permits	20%
Balance of previous year	12%

The village as a whole has never worked in deficit. Though, in the middle 1960's, the water fund was operating in the red.

The politics of the village has always operated as individuals. No candidate or candidates have ever filed as having political party affiliation.

INFORMATION COMPILED BY INTERVIEWS WITH:

EDWARD W. PAESEL, MAYOR
TED THEODORE, EXEC. ASST.
GERRY POPPERS, POLICE SGT.

REF: "25 YEARS FO PRIDE AND PROGRESS"
HISTORY OF SAUK VILLAGE BOOKLET
COMMEMORATING 25th ANNIVERSARY