



*Office of Mayor Lawrence J. Morrissey  
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## **PRESS RELEASE**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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**March 10, 2010**

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### **ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARADE TO START ON 7<sup>TH</sup> STREET**

ROCKFORD, IL. – March 10, 2010 – Thanks to an offer of assistance in personnel and equipment from Winnebago County Chairman Scott Christiansen, the St. Patrick's Day Parade will be able to return to their traditional starting point on 7<sup>th</sup> Street this Saturday, March 13<sup>th</sup>.

Due to recent budget cuts and the loss of special event funding this year, the City of Rockford had changed the parade starting point from 7<sup>th</sup> Street to Madison Avenue near the Riverview Ice House. The new route would have saved the City an estimated 50% in staffing and equipment costs. The change in venue shortened the route, but more importantly, disrupted long-standing family traditions in celebrating the day's festivities.

“While changing the parade route was a difficult decision, the City felt it needed to find a balance between the expenses each one of our parades present to our budget and the need to continue to provide the community with family events,” said Assistant City Administrator Julia Scott Valdez. The St. Patrick's Day Parade had cost the city approximately \$6000.00 last year. Larger events, such as the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade and fireworks display had cost the city almost \$85,000.00. In total, staff and support services for special events cost the City of Rockford close to \$500,000 in 2009.

County Board Chairman Scott Christiansen stated, “We feel the parade and parade routes are long standing traditions in our community and County government is pleased to assist the City in the continuation of tradition. Winnebago County Sheriff Richard Meyers will be providing six officers for traffic control and the Winnebago County Highway Department will provide barricades as required. This type of collaboration between the

City of Rockford and the County of Winnebago is in keeping with our pledge to pursue joint efforts in providing government services.”

Chairman Christiansen and Mayor Morrissey had recently announced that the two agencies would begin to investigate opportunities to integrated services and operations and have put together a Citizen’s Advisory Group to begin the process. “I’d like to personally thank the Chairman for this generous offer,” said Mayor Morrissey. “By stepping in and offering County assistance the County has allowed the traditional parade to continue and has exemplified our goal of finding more efficient and effective ways of governing the Rockford region.”

The Parade route will begin at the traditional 7<sup>th</sup> Street starting point and will travel west on State Street. Rather than traveling north on Wyman however, its northbound route will be along Main Street to Beattie Park.

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