

These are difficult times for both America and for Crystal Lake.

The economic downturn has impacted all of us, but none of us so much as those of whom make our living running a business. Our hearts, minds and bodies are invested in making these businesses work.

Yet, as we look around ourselves, we see that some of our local businesses are having difficulty making payroll. Many families can not pay their bills or their mortgage, much less buy from our businesses. Many workers are seeing their life savings disappear. And many of us are both anxious and uncertain of what the future will hold.

We must do more than survive these trying times, we must keep moving forward.

There is much to do, but one way the Crystal Lake government can work with business is to align ourselves with the greater cause of the country. As a country, we must burrow out of the economic mire that we are in and drive forward. As a business community in Crystal Lake, we must do the same and track down and take advantage of the opportunities in this business climate.

Within this economic crisis, we find ourselves with opportunity. For example, there are many opportunities for Crystal Lake within the United States stimulus plan that offer concrete solutions that will drive sales for our town. Business and government alignment to these packages will drive business and renew Crystal Lake's status as a business center.

- First-time homebuyers who purchase their homes before December 1st may be eligible for an \$8,000 tax credit.
- People who buy new cars before the end of the year can write off the sales taxes.
- Homeowners who add energy-efficient windows, furnaces and air conditioners can get a tax credit to cover 30% of the costs, up to a total of \$1,500.
- Road and infrastructure development money has been released so Crystal Lake can work with the larger Federal Government to rebuild our roads.
- There's a 30 percent tax credit of up to \$1,500 for the purchase of efficient residential air conditioners, heat pumps or furnaces. The credit also can be used by homeowners to replace leaky windows or put more insulation into the attic.

Working with the Federal Government on these initiatives creates direct business opportunities for many of our businesses, and also puts money in the pockets of employees so they (as customers) can reinvest revenue into our businesses.

On a different note, it is also time to revisit the 75% Crystal Lake sales tax hike that occurred back last year by the existing Crystal Lake council.

More opportunities are available for our government to be business friendly, and it is my intention to drive the Crystal Lake council to build business.

Now is the time for all of us, together, to move quickly and resolutely as a business community, a government, and as a country, to drive revenue and to provide for our families.

David Bradford