



## **rRemarks Data for January 13, 2026 Village Council Meeting**

**Agenda Section & Item:** First Reading - INF 2026-11073 C. Information: Discussion of Proposed Actions Concerning Federal Immigration Activities

**Commenter:** Ilene T Briner

**Comment:** ICE is protecting citizens from harm by removing criminal illegal persons from our community. That makes us safer. It's a crime to restrict federal agents 18 USC 1501. It is unlawful to knowingly and willfully obstruct, resist, or interfere with a federal officer's duties. This is a misdemeanor with penalties, including up to a year in prison or fines, depending on circumstances.

I do not want to put our Downers Grove police officers on an illegal operation and put the village in line for a huge fine. Let's have our officers use their time working on keeping the village safe, not on a political boondoggle.

**Agenda Section & Item:** First Reading - INF 2026-11073 C. Information: Discussion of Proposed Actions Concerning Federal Immigration Activities

**Commenter:** Jeff

**Comment:** I am writing as a resident of Downers Grove, supporting item INF2026-11073.

Downers Grove has both the authority and the obligation to protect public safety, maintain public trust, and control the use of Village property. Declining to host federal immigration staging on Village property and directing our Police Department to respond to resident safety concerns are reasonable exercises of that responsibility.

This is not abstract. In recent days, federal immigration enforcement operations have ended in gunfire - including a fatal shooting in Minneapolis and two more people shot in Portland. When armed agents operate in communities without clear identification or transparency, residents hesitate to call for help, cooperate with police, or report crimes. That makes everyone less safe.

The proposed actions do not attempt to regulate federal law. They assert local standards: transparency, professionalism, and accountability in our community. Those standards are consistent with actions already taken by many neighboring municipalities. I urge the Council to adopt these measures and reaffirm Downers Grove's commitment to being a safe and welcoming community for all residents. Public safety in Downers

Grove depends on trust, transparency, and restraint - and that's exactly what this ordinance protects.

**Agenda Section & Item:** Comments of a General Nature

**Commenter:** David Rose

**Comment:** Comment on the MLK Jr Day proclamation

Anticipating CC (council chair) will reprise again his usual proclamation for MLK Day.

I again reprise mine, with notable alterations.

In 2026, Jan 19 is Martin Luther King Jr Day in the US.

I presume CC will as usual use his MLK Jr Day proclamation to call for a day of service.

In response I again note that such a call is a classic version of the sterilized, milquetoast way in which white America — especially the well-to-do part of it — wishes to remember and memorialize the life and work of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

To repeat, I don't believe King and his supporters were marching and subjecting themselves to physical attack and risk of death so that more people in the US would be motivated simply to work in a food pantry or soup kitchen, paint the walls of a senior center, or render some other such service to each other, laudable as those acts are.

As I have noted previously, our country still does not have a national community service entity because the Republican Party portion of it believes such an entity would likely pursue objectives and engage in activities it opposes. Better to have the principal —indeed sole — focus of promoting unity in the country be the military, and the fomenting of paranoia about and the waging of war against all those foreign nations who fail to appreciate ours is the exceptional nation, God's gift to the world.

Indeed, now that the Republican Party has become the Trump Party and taken control of the federal government, advocating for serving others seems quaintly outdated. The Trump Party might even deem it domestic terrorism.

So here we are approaching 60 years since MLK's untimely death, assassinated at age 39; and not only is much of what he struggled for still to be done, much of what he accomplished and inspired others to achieve is at risk of being undone.

King pondered the obstacles he faced, and was coming to believe 'white well-meaning moderates' were among them. In what has become known as his Letter from Birmingham Jail, in 1963 he wrote the following:

"I have almost reached the regrettable conclusion that the Negro's great stumbling block in the stride for freedom is not the White citizens' 'Councilor' or the Ku Klux Klan, but the white moderate who is more devoted to 'order' than to justice; who prefers a negative peace which is the absence of tension than to a positive peace which is the presence of justice; who constantly says 'I agree with you in the goal you seek, but I can't agree with your methods of direct action(;)' who paternalistically feels that he can set the timetable for another man's freedom; who lives by the myth of time and who constantly advises the Negro to wait until a 'more convenient season.' Shallow

understanding from people of good will is more frustrating than absolute misunderstanding from people of ill will. Lukewarm acceptance is more bewildering than outright rejection.”

One can't help but wonder how King would assess the social and societal dynamics of today's America, influenced as they are by the forces of white Christian nationalism and their relentless effort to limit the freedom of those not of their kin and kind.

Those dynamics have worsened dramatically since Trump took office a second time, unbridled as he and his minions are this time around by any restraint from moderates in his own party or the country. While much of the rest of the world has known or suspected, it has become increasingly evident to Americans themselves that our leaders and their supporters have little to no respect for either national or international law ..when the US and especially US elites are not the main beneficiaries of those laws. Fascists and other lesser authoritarians have always been a part of the nation's polity. With Trump 2.0, they have gained control of all branches of government, and act with impunity, no longer feeling a need to sugar-coat, hide, or attribute higher purposes to their actions.

So what's changed? Many, including Dems, frame Trump 2.0 as the US reverting to old-style colonialism. This contrasts to Dems' understanding that in recent decades (the post WWII period) the US was a benign force for good in the world, acting when necessary as its 'policeman' to maintain a world order intended to benefit everyone, albeit occasionally making 'mistakes' in implementation.

That benign framing obfuscates and self-deceives about the country's imperialist objectives and the reality accompanying them. What has changed I would argue are not US objectives but its methods. Why have methods changed?

For reasons I have been pointing out repeatedly to VC for the past many years:

(i) the American way of life is not ecologically sustainable and  
(ii) US domination of the international political economic order that has allowed the American way of life to persist in spite of this essential defect (by US giving the rest of the world IOUs we cannot pay in exchange for their resources and the products of their labor) is now challenged by an alternative strong enough to allow the previously exploited to escape. That is, to be free to determine their own political economic destiny. The potency of that alternative means US imperialist purposes can no longer be achieved using selective, less subtle, less visible, less violent measures.

All the conflicts and potential conflicts around the world in which the US is involved stem from its imperialist objective: Ukraine, Venezuela, Iran, Taiwan, Palestine, and so on. They're all part of the US elites' effort (supported by Dems and Repubs alike) to resist the BRICS-led alternative to the US dominated international order.

Worsening inequality is the self-evident manifestation of the reality of the US-led global order. Moving toward a more equal and sustainable world order is the resistance's objective.

Today as in King's day, the question is: where do Americans stand? Do we support American imperialism or do we oppose it? Do we support worsening inequality at home and abroad or do we resist it? Do we support maintaining a way of living that is not ecologically sustainable, or do we strive to change our way of living and all that that entails?

That's what MLK Day should be about, but isn't yet.

Those Americans willing to honor King prefer to see him solely as a civil rights leader, but as I have noted previously that characterization fails to acknowledge the fullness of his life's work and the implications of carrying on its legacy.

What CC's proclamation should call for is

a day of self-examination, both personal and institutional, to assess one's relationship to racism and other forms of exploitation.

a day of reconciliation that explores how to heal the deep wounds of our nation's history and shrink the gender, racial, ethnic, and class divides.

a day of empowerment, in which people are encouraged to examine the impact past suppression of African American voting has had and discuss what needs to change if voting in our democracy is to be not something we fight over but something we practice as a key part of the joint responsibility we call self-governing.

a day of peace and restraint, in acknowledgement of King's opposition to the Vietnam War and American militarism more generally; for us, an opportunity to assess among other things how it is our nation's self-image contrasts so dramatically with its interminably acquisitive and belligerent behavior in the world. to assess how all too many of us have a facile capacity to dehumanize in the name of any of a range of motives, from self-aggrandizement to pursuit of higher good.

a day of justice and opportunity, in acknowledgement of King's recognition that fighting to overcome poverty was a way to unify and uplift poor people of every color. A day, in other words, in which we examine why our democracy has failed to ensure equal educational and economic opportunity, medical care, and safety in one's person. In which we investigate what must happen for our society to stop using poor people, especially poor people of color, as the safety-valve whenever the capitalist economy needs a downturn in order to undo its excesses.

a day of dignity and equality, in which we assess why our capitalist economy has failed to deliver higher standards of living for so many and not only failed to reduce inequality but worsened it, and explore how to change these failings in order to allow each of us to provide for and contribute to our individual and collective well-being.

finally, a day of ecological sustainability, in acknowledgement of King's opposition to materialism, in which we examine to their very core the workings of the capitalist system in order to figure out what needs to change in both the public and private sectors if we are to prevent the ravages of our present ecologically unsustainable way of living from devastating not only the poor, regardless of race or ethnicity, but every single one of us.

MLK Jr Day as a day of service? That's about the least white America can do to honor Dr King.

Trump is about to begin the second year of his second term as president.

That Trump and the Trump Party are a threat to democracy in the US is now self-evident.

See for example historian Heather Cox Richardson's podcast about Trump 2.0 as a shift to fascism:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qQAhv7j-NLM>

That Dems and the entrenched two-party system of elections are not much better is also self-evident.

One of the civil rights movement's 1960s' anthems — "a change is gonna come" — has taken on perilous meaning.

Trump talks openly of needing his party to win the 2026 elections in order to avoid his being impeached and removed from office.

Unfortunately, it will take more than removing Trump from office to undo the damage the US has done and continues to do, both here and abroad.

So I ask again:

Will we recognize the America of Inauguration Day, 2029?

Will the nation have blossomed, withered, or self-destructed?

Will the nation still be honoring MLK Jr Day as a national holiday in 2029? Will it be a day honoring the nation's positive role as part of the global resistance to fascism?

Where does DG stand?

**Agenda Section & Item:** First Reading - INF 2026-11073 C. Information: Discussion of Proposed Actions Concerning Federal Immigration Activities

**Commenter:** Kim Morton 2248 Durand Dr.

**Comment:** I support the measure restricting & monitoring ICE activity in Downers Grove. Locating & apprehending a KNOWN offender for whom an arrest warrant has been issued does NOT require staging areas. Additionally, the many instances documented on video of ICE physically abusing law abiding citizens for exercising their constitutional rights of assembly & free speech indicate monitoring & documenting how ICE agents conduct themselves is warranted. Thank you for your service to the Village of Downers Grove.

**Agenda Section & Item:** Mayor's Report - RES 2026-11063 B. Resolution: Appointing Members to Village Boards and Commissions

**Commenter:** Concerned citizen

**Comment:** Happy to see appointments on tonight's agenda; hope these include the two long overdue library trustee appointments!