

Village of Woodridge Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) **Arising out of the 2010 Community Needs Survey**

Woodridge Police Department

How does the Village ensure that there is adequate Police presence?

There are 51 sworn officers assigned to the Woodridge Police Department. Officers are assigned to two divisions: Operations and Support. The Operations Division is the most visible component of the police department. Headed by a Deputy Police Chief and supervised by four patrol sergeants and one tactical sergeant, 35 patrol and tactical officers are responsible for responding to criminal complaints, traffic complaints, and miscellaneous calls for service in addition to providing high visibility patrol to residential and commercial properties on a daily basis. The Support Division is headed by a Deputy Chief who oversees Investigations, Communications, Information Management, Community Resource Center, and Special Projects. One Crime Prevention Officer reports to the Deputy Chief. Investigations is supervised by a sergeant to whom 5 detectives report. The Administrative Sergeant oversees Special Projects.

What can be done about illegal vehicle parking in the Village? (parking over sidewalks, parking overnight)

Parking a car in a way that blocks sidewalks is prohibited by Village ordinance. The Village understands that moving cars off the street at night might require the blockage of a section of sidewalk. The Police Department is directed to exercise tolerance and discretion in enforcing the “sidewalk ordinance” after 10:00 p.m. and before 5:30 a.m. Temporary permission for vehicle parking due to mechanical failure, lack of parking space caused by overnight guests, or driveway repairs may be granted by calling (630) 968-2866.

What can be done about speeding vehicles in the residential areas of the Village?

The Village actively monitors the speed of traffic in our community and tries to gain motorist compliance through a combination of education and enforcement. Our speed trailers are regularly deployed to warn inattentive motorists so they may adjust their speed accordingly. Speeding is consistently the most frequent traffic violation cited by the Woodridge Police Department. In fact, 1,179 speeding tickets were issued in 2009 in order to help address this issue.

What can be done about unleashed animals?

The Village of Woodridge Ordinance prohibits dogs or cats from running at large off the property of the owner. If you see a violation of this ordinance, you may contact the Woodridge Police Department at (630) 719-4740 to make a report. These violations may be investigated by either a Police Officer or a Community Service Officer. The fine for this offense, if paid in lieu of appearing in court, is \$30.00. The second offense within a twelve (12) month period is \$50.00 and the third offense is \$100.00.

What can I do if a Police Officer acts in an unprofessional manner?

Police Department employees are expected to conduct themselves professionally. If you have a complaint that an employee conducted himself/herself in an inappropriate manner, you can register a complaint by contacting the on-duty watch commander. It should be noted, however, that the professional demeanor of a police employee is dictated by the circumstances facing that employee.

Police brevity and a lack of expression are often the basis for unfounded complaints of discourteous conduct.

Why are bicyclists allowed to ride in the street?

According to the Illinois Vehicle Code, bicyclists are considered vehicles and are permitted to ride in the street. Bicyclists are required to follow the Rules of the Road in the same way as a motorized vehicle, but do have the right to utilize streets for riding.

What is the Village doing to prevent the use of loud car stereos?

Loud car stereos are a common problem in the spring and summer months when motorists drive with their windows down and the music turned up. Not only is this disturbing to residents, it is against the law. If you hear this type of violation, you may contact the Police Department at the non-emergency number (630) 719-4740. Be prepared to provide the dispatcher with as much information as possible, such as vehicle make and model and license plate, so that the officers may properly respond to your call.

Finance Department

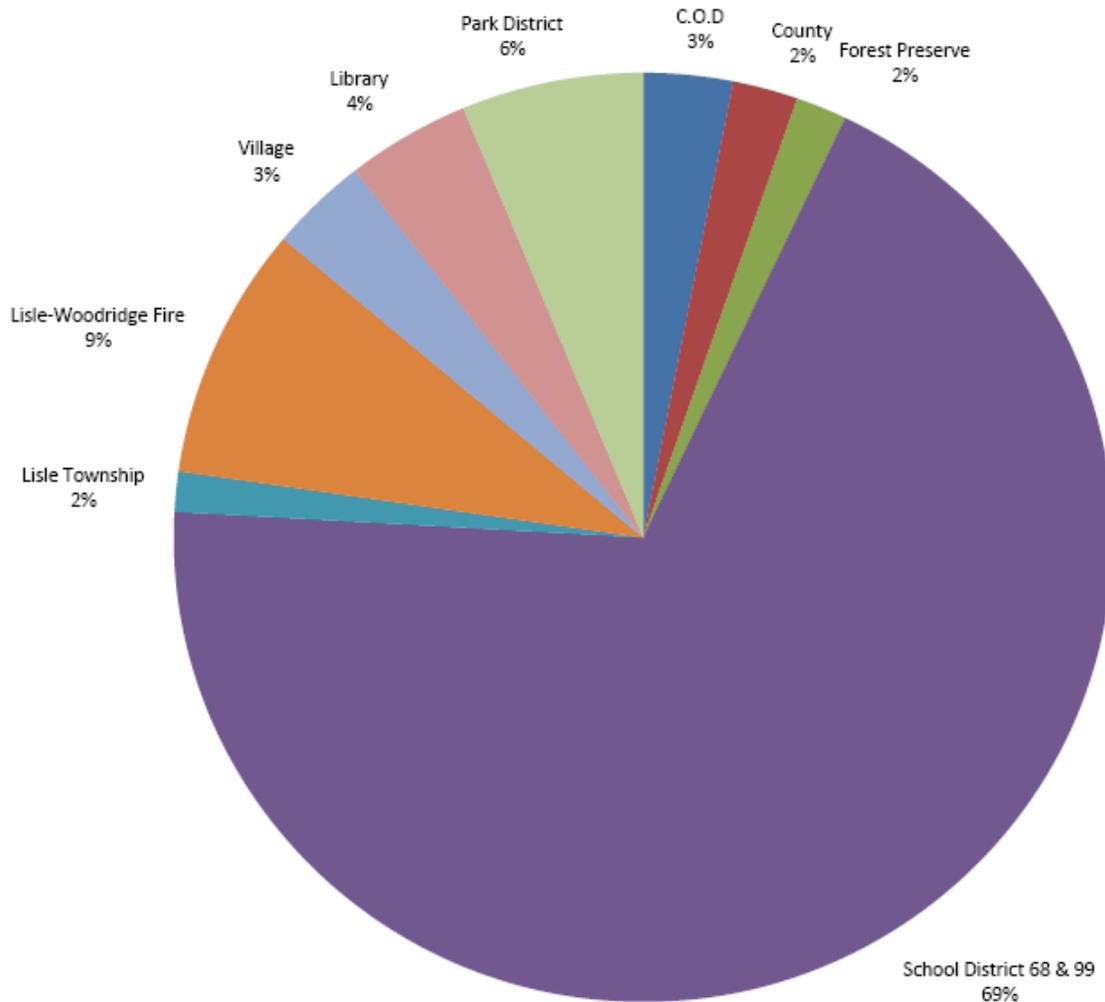
How is the Village helping to reduce the residential tax burden?

The Village has a variety of housing types, which result in a variety of market values. The average market value in 2009 was \$289,048 with the Village portion of the average tax bill calculating to \$225 or 3% of the total tax bill. This compares well to the average 1991 home which cost \$121,000, and paid \$220 in Village tax.

The Mayor and Village Board continue to focus on reducing the residential tax burden as one of their primary goals. Taxpayers have witnessed the Village portion of the tax rate decreasing for the past 24, while the value of their homes has increased on average 5.5% annually. However, the Village Board recognizes that while it can directly provide property tax relief on the Village portion, taxpayers are impacted by the overall property tax bill. This topic has been previously discussed during Village workshops. While there is recognition that the Village cannot directly influence the other taxing bodies as they do not report to the Village, Village staff has been directed to develop ideas and processes for indirectly influencing the other 97% of the tax bill such as the Intergovernmental Taxing Body Report Card. This report card is a comparison to similar taxing bodies within DuPage County and distributed to provide assistance when setting their tax levy. The Village tax rate ranked the 6th lowest in 2009 and remains in the lowest quartile for DuPage County municipality tax rates. We would also like to remind our senior citizens to make sure they are getting the exemptions they may qualify for. Information is available at the DuPage County Supervisor of Assessments Website, www.dupageco.org/soa or by calling (630) 407-5858. Please see the DuPage County Tax Code Comparison newsletter for additional information.

Comparison of 2009 Taxing Bodies by Percent

Includes: Lisle Township, Lisle/Woodridge Fire Protection District, School Districts 68, 99, 502 (College of DuPage).



Community Development

What is the Village doing to preserve open space?

Woodridge is fortunate to have over 5,200 acres of designated open space. While commercial development is necessary for the economic well being of any community, balanced growth preserves Woodridge's quality of life. The Village relies on the Comprehensive Plan as a guide for balanced development in the areas of open space creation/preservation, the provision of appropriate transitions between land uses, and linkages between residential and open space uses. Developers of new residential subdivisions are required to dedicate either land or cash to the Woodridge Park District for recreational purposes to serve the immediate and future needs of the residents of the development. Thanks to the community's support, the Village of Woodridge and Woodridge Park District have successfully acquired the Community High School District 99 property. The acquisition, which totals

44 acres located South of Center Drive and East of Woodridge Drive in Woodridge, ensures that the property will remain a part of Town Centre and continue to be a community asset.

While there are no current plans to make changes to the property, the community will be instrumental in the creation of a future master plan for all of Town Centre. Once the Village and Park District determine the appropriate time to start the Town Centre planning process, the community will be asked to provide feedback on future community needs within the Town Centre, including future civic, open space and recreational needs for the 44 acres. In addition to the 44 acres, the plan will include Lake Harriet, Lake Carleton Park District Community Center, Hawthorne Hill Woods, Memorial Park, Jefferson Junior High School and the existing Town Centre Plaza encompassing the Village Hall, Police & Public Works, Library and Post Office facilities.

In the interim, the 44 acres will continue to serve the needs of the community as it has for the last 40 years providing open space for the annual Woodridge Jubilee, sporting events and a place to simply enjoy nature. The Park District and the Village look forward to working with the community to plan for the future of this unique Woodridge asset.

What is the Village doing to support local businesses during the recession?

The Village and the Woodridge Chamber of Commerce have worked together for the past year to support local businesses through the creation of the Shop Local, Shop Woodridge campaign. Through the campaign residents have a better understanding of the link between spending dollars locally and its impact on supporting local jobs and providing local taxes that fund necessary Village services like public safety and infrastructure improvements.

Business owners and developers require a timely, responsive development review process in order to invest in a community. Earlier this year the Village Board approved code changes that have improved coordination and communication among Village departments conducting development review. These changes have also shortened the development review process for proposed minor changes to approved plans. The Village is currently looking at additional changes to the Village Code that will help businesses compete during a challenging economy.

Is the Village planning on building more apartment complexes?

Woodridge has a diverse variety of well-maintained housing stock. Our housing stock provides alternatives for all needs and price ranges. A Woodridge resident can purchase condominium units as low as \$60,000 and single-family homes for as much as \$1 million. In response to resident feedback, the Village has been focusing on the needs of seniors in the community. The Plan Commission and Village Board held workshops in 2008 to identify senior housing development opportunities and sought public feedback in 2009. Based on this input, staff is working to promote senior housing opportunities for residents at Pine Ridge on Janes Avenue and the Orchard Hill site located at the southwest corner of 83rd Street and Boughton Road.

What is being done to redevelop the south Janes Avenue area?

The Village Board is dedicated to promoting the redevelopment of the south Janes Avenue area. A number of initiatives have been put in place over the years including the establishment of the Janes Avenue Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District. Since its inception, the TIF District has been generating tax revenue to be spent towards redevelopment of the area. TIF District funds have been used for streetscape improvements along the Janes Avenue/83rd Street intersection, as well as private property investment for 8200 Janes Avenue, and assisting in making several management and physical improvements to the Waterbury Condominiums.

In 2006, the Village Board approved a ¼% sales tax increase for community reinvestment initiatives. The first project to receive funds from the initiative is the Pine Ridge redevelopment project. The developer is rehabbing existing units for condominiums and is selling a portion of the property to the Village to provide for future community senior housing. It is anticipated that senior housing might be available as early as 2012. The combined efforts encourage private reinvestment in the neighborhood which in turn increases the tax base to help support the Village governmental partners in contributing to a better community.

Why doesn't the Village have a downtown?

Since the Village is not located along a train route or major waterway that had historically been used for transportation, it was unlikely that Woodridge would develop a traditional downtown area. Woodridge does have a Town Centre for civic and open space uses, which includes the Police and Public Works Departments, the Public Library, Park District Community Center, Village Hall, U.S. Post Office and the 44 acres west of Village Hall. The Town Centre remains a focal point for the community, gathering many public-oriented services together amongst parks, walking paths and public plazas.

In the tradition of a more downtown feel, Seven Bridges has developed as a retail and entertainment center for the community on Route 53. This 400-acre mixed-use development combines retail, office, entertainment, recreational and residential uses in one location. Main Street at Seven Bridges is a mixed-use, 26 acre commercial development.

What is the status of the Seven Bridges Development?

Seven Bridges Development is currently in receivership. CB Richard Ellis, a nationally recognized leader in property management and real estate brokerage firm, has been appointed as the receiver of the development. Village staff has been working with CBRE to ensure that the high standards of the development are maintained and to market the development to potential tenants. Existing businesses within Seven Bridges continue to thrive. The most recent addition is the opening of Eggstacy Cafe. To find out more about Seven Bridges, contact the Community Development Department at (630) 719-4750.

Can anything be done about the "rundown" homes in Woodridge?

In the Spring of each year, the Community Development Department implements the Annual Neighborhood Inspection Program to identify specific properties in Woodridge in need of maintenance improvements, i.e., peeling paint, driveways needing repair or replacement, tall grass/weeds, debris on property, etc. Letters are mailed to each of the property owners requesting them to bring their properties into compliance with the 2003 International Property Maintenance Code. In addition to the annual program, the Department routinely inspects neighborhoods for violations. For the eighth straight year, Woodridge homeowners have invested over \$5 million annually in neighborhood improvements.

What has the Village done to respond to the changing housing market and foreclosures issue?

The Village had taken a proactive approach to the changes in the housing market. A portion of the Village website as well as print publications have been dedicated to resources that help homeowners prevent foreclosure and direct homeowners to resources that help with financing in these difficult times. The Village has also focused efforts on identifying foreclosures in town in order to work with the current owners to keep the properties maintained. If you have additional questions on foreclosures or if you would like to draw the Village's attention to a specific property, contact the Community Development Department at (630) 719-4750.

What are the regulations for tall grass and weed control?

The Village must follow State law on notice and abatement of nuisance violations, i.e., weeds and tall grass. When weeds/tall grass are 8” tall, the Village must document the violation with a photograph and send a written notice giving the property owner seven days to comply. If the nuisance is addressed, the Village will hire a contractor to mow the property. The property owner is billed for the mowing and, if the bill is not paid, a lien is placed on the property. The Village cannot regulate the trimming of bushes unless they overhang the sidewalk or block motorist’s vision. The Community Development Department enforces the codes outlined in the 2003 International Property Maintenance Code as it relates to property maintenance.

What can the Village do to address maintenance issues relating to multi-family and/or rental communities?

In 1993, the Village Board approved the Multi-Family Dwelling License Ordinance to ensure that the multi-family rental complexes in Woodridge are maintained. Inspections of all the common areas and a minimum of 20% of the units are inspected each year. All violations are noted and must be repaired within a specific time frame. In January of each year, a license application is required and a Multi-Family Dwelling License is issued if the building is in full compliance. Owners that do not comply with the Multi-Family Dwelling License Ordinance are issued citations requiring court appearances. The Community Development Department enforces the 2003 International Property Maintenance Code for property maintenance violations noted in multi-family complexes that consist of individually owned condominiums. If Woodridge residents have specific questions or concerns, contact the Community Development Department at (630) 719-4750.

Can the Village do anything about the overcrowding problem in some homes?

There are two things to consider when determining overcrowding. The first consideration is the definition of family. A “family” as defined by the 1998 International One and Two Family Dwelling Code is “an individual, two or more persons related by blood, marriage or law, or a group of not more than any five persons living together in a dwelling unit. The second consideration is minimum area requirements within dwelling units as outlined by the 2003 International Property Maintenance Code. In the determination of overcrowding there are several factors that need to be addressed such as living space, sleeping quarters, food preparation and eating spaces and personal hygiene facilities. The Community Development Department in conjunction with the Police Department will monitor a home if we suspect that an overcrowding situation may exist. If you have any additional questions regarding overcrowding, you may call the Community Development Department at (630) 719-4750.

Public Works Department

Can the Village’s snowplowing efforts be improved?

The Public Works Department has a snow removal plan which provides for opening up the arterial streets first, then moving to the minor arterials, collector streets, and then side streets along with courts and cul-de sacs. This is necessary in order to open up the most heavily traveled streets first, thereby accommodating the largest number of travelers as early as possible. The snow plan includes making one pass through each court and cul-de-sac to open them up while the other larger streets are being cleared. This provides some relief prior to plows coming back and completing each court and cul-de-sac. For the past few years, the Public Works Department has been trying some innovative ways of reducing the amount of accumulated ice and snow in the roads such as a brine program that spreads a thin layer of liquid salt on the roads prior to a snow or ice event. The Public Works Department will continue to rely on snow plowing and newer techniques to keep Village streets as clear as possible in the winter months.

As for concerns that snow plows push snow from the street back into the driveway, this is a necessary result of snow plowing. Snow from the street must be removed – it would be impossible for snowplow drivers to lift or re-direct their plows at every intersection with a driveway. Furthermore, there is no other place to efficiently push the snow. Residents can do the following to reduce the amount of snow that ends up in their driveways: *1) When shoveling your driveway apron, place the snow to the left of your driveway (as you face your house). If piled on the other side, it becomes the target for a snow plow that is getting close to the curb, and will end up in your driveway. 2) Clear a few feet of the edge of the street and curb line to the right of your driveway (again, as you face your house). This will help reduce the amount of snow that gets dumped in your driveway as the plow goes by.* During the course of plowing, the snowplow may inadvertently damage the parkway adjacent to the roadway. While the Village maintains a listing of areas that need to be restored in the Spring, should you notice an area that has been damaged, please contact the Public Works Department at (630) 719-4753 to ensure it has already been added to the restoration list.

Can something be done about the traffic flow around the Post Office?

The Village has examined the layout a number of times to determine if minor modifications can be made to ease the traffic flow problems. A couple of years ago a change was made at the suggestion of a Public Works employee, relocating a STOP sign near the Post Office to improve traffic flow; traffic flow has improved with this minor change. Significant physical modifications of the parking and driving areas would be necessary to make any notable improvements to the traffic patterns. While the layout can be a source of frustration for those who want to quickly get in and out of the parking lot, there have been few reported accidents. The best solution at this point appears to be for residents to exercise due caution and patience while maneuvering through the lot, while obeying the signage that has been put in place – the delay time is generally no more than a few seconds.

Where can I go to recycle electronics such as personal computers and televisions?

The closest resource to Woodridge residents for electronic recycling is located at the DuPage County Green Valley Wastewater Treatment Plant in Woodridge. This facility is located on Route 53 just south of 75th Street. They accept electronics for recycling Monday-Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. For additional information, call (630) 407-6700. For more information on recycling in Woodridge, visit www.vil.woodridge.il.us/departments/pw/refuse.

What can be done when a ComEd power outage occurs?

Report all power outages to ComEd by calling 1-800-Edison1 (1-800-334-7661). Regardless of the duration, frequency, or cause, the outage must be reported immediately to assess the problem and respond appropriately. In addition, please contact the Woodridge Public Works Department (630) 719-4753 to report this information so that we can track ComEd's response to your concerns. Com Ed has implemented a number of improvements that have increased the level of reliability, but the Village continues to monitor ComEd for long term improvement.

Why do my cable rates keep increasing?

The Federal Communications Commission dictates that the local franchise authority, the Village of Woodridge, is able to regulate only the cost of Basic Cable Service. Pricing on the other levels of service is not regulated. According to the *FCC's Report on Cable/Satellite TV Competition*, cable rates have steadily increased up to 6% each year, but leveled off in 2006. In raising rates, Comcast explains that they are passing on increased programming charges from popular cable channels like ESPN. Comcast says increases have also been used to pay for investments in new services like video on demand and improved customer service. Recently, satellite TV rivals have been effective in pressuring cable companies to maintain pricing levels. More recently, telephone companies also are putting price

pressure on the cable industry. In some states, telephone companies have launched TV service with competitive price packages.

When will AT&T be available in Woodridge?

The AT&T U-Verse product is currently available in limited neighborhoods on the north end of Woodridge. The Village has been working diligently with AT&T to encourage expansion Village-wide. Because the company is working to expand their services all over the Chicago area and Illinois, it will take a few years before the service is universally available. AT&T is currently distributing their capital improvement dollars evenly across their service area. They are currently working on their build out plans for the current year and will share those plans with Woodridge once they are completed. The Village will continue to work with AT&T to quickly review permit applications for future expansion.