



The Villager

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Village of Godfrey Office of Economic Development

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You can see your future from
here.



Michael J. McCormick

Mayor

Village Creates New Program to Assist Local Businesses



The Economic Development Committee has reviewed the facade program. After a few years of the program's existence, it was determined that some modifications would be beneficial. The Commercial Facade Improvement Program has been terminated. In its place is the Commercial Property Enhancement Grant (CPEG). Below is a description of the new grant program.

Purpose: To support the economic vitality and community appearance of commercial property within the Godfrey Business District; foster investment in commercial corridors; and encourage investment in existing commercial structures.

Approval: Based upon merit and design of the project, the Village reserves the right to prioritize applications on the basis of the scope of work, the level of investment, and the expected impact of the proposed project toward the program's purpose.

Funding: First \$5,000 — maximum grant is 50%; and, \$5,001 and above in eligible expenses — maximum is 25%. The grant limit is a maximum of \$20,000 per project.

Eligible Expenses: Significant facade renovations, signage, awnings, doors, and windows. Landscaping if it follows Godfrey Ordinance No. 15-2007. Parking lots if brought up to ADA compliance and Village codes. All appropriate permits must be secured.

Ineligible Expenses: Regular repairs and maintenance, demolition, design, permit fees; and expenses incurred or contracted prior to

grant approval. If company is receiving Village funds through other programs, excluding utilities modification and the Site Readiness Grant, it is not eligible to access funds from the Commercial Property Enhancement Grant. Building renovations with the intent to sell.

Eligibility Criteria and Conditions: Owners and tenants of properties within Godfrey's Business District (at time of application). The property's primary use must be commercial. Tenants must provide written authorization from the property owner for the contemplated improvements and participation in the program. Note that while the building needs not to be fully leased, the grant priority will be given to fully leased properties. If the tenant or owner who receives grant funding should sell property, move, or remove work financed with a grant within three years of grant date, repayment of the grant will be required, pro rata for a period of the remaining three-year term. No additional grant funds are available for similar work at same space for a period of at least five years.

For information about this grant, contact:

Jim Mager at 618466-3325;

or,

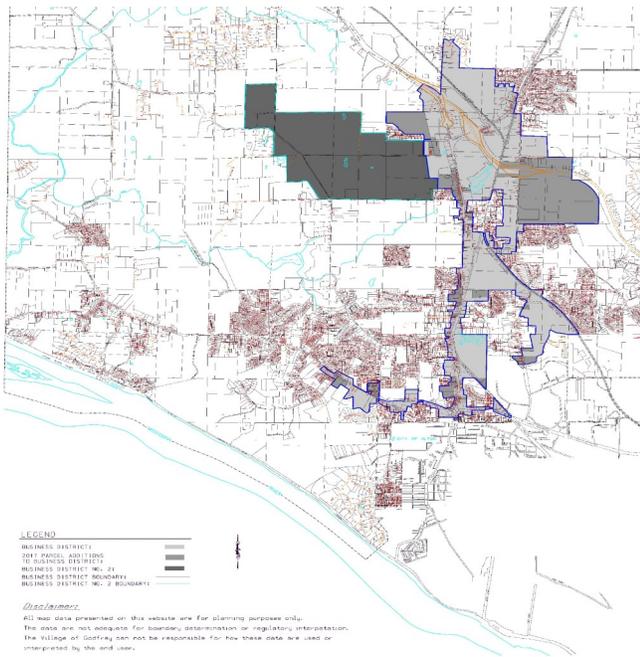
jmager@godfreyil.org

Did you know.....?

Almost 60% of Godfrey residents drive less than 29 minutes to commute to work. Given the price of gas, that is mighty handy!



It Depend on Location.....



VILLAGE OF GODFREY BUSINESS DISTRICT LAYOUT

In 2012, the Village implemented both a Business District (BD) and a Tax Incremental Financing District (TIF). Like Tax Increment Financing (TIF), the BD allows Godfrey to pledge tax revenues toward redevelopment in a blighted area. However, unlike TIF, this tool allows communities to increase sales and/or hotel motel tax within the boundaries of the Business District. The BD can generate its own revenues or be used in conjunction with TIF to generate additional revenues for projects. In 2017, the BD and the TIF were amended to include additional properties.

The Business District Development and Redevelopment Law authorizes a municipality to impose a tax designed to fund the development or redevelopment of certain designated areas within a municipality. The municipality may impose this tax if it has a development or redevelopment plan for an area of the municipality that:

- is contiguous (i.e. the properties within the area border each other),
- includes only parcels of real property that will directly and substantially benefit from the proposed plan; and,
- is blighted, as defined in the Illinois Municipal Code (see 65 ILCS 5/11-74.3-5)

Recently there has been some expression of concern and/or disappointment that businesses not located in a BD/TIF do not have access to the same financial assistance opportuni-

ties as those inside one of the incentive districts.

When setting up these incentive districts, it is not a typical practice to encompass an entire community. A Business District is really designed to be a targeted economic development tool. At the same time a TIF is to be limited to a qualified blighted area. These facts are particularly pertinent to a community such as Godfrey for two reasons.

Firstly, "the district should include only parcels that can benefit from the development programming." Not all of Godfrey qualifies under such criteria. There are some businesses located in more residential areas lacking a concentration of commercial enterprises. Given the locale is mostly residential, it does not qualify as a "business development" area. Consequently, it would be unlikely to justify placing such an area in an incentive district.

Secondly, when setting up a BD/TIF, it is necessary to demonstrate the area is "blighted, as defined in the Illinois Municipal Code (see 65 ILCS 5/11-74.3-5)." While it was possible to demonstrate some degree of blight in our current incentive districts, it would not be possible, or advisable, to make a claim that all of Godfrey is blighted. Moreover, given the relative affluence of Godfrey in general, does anyone really believe, or desire, the community to be label itself as blighted. What would be the effect of property values under that situation?

When setting boundaries of BD's or TIF's it required foresight and decision making on behalf of the community officials and appropriate stakeholders. Consideration was given for future plans of the community and where future development seemed to make the most sense. While individuals involved in setting up district boundaries were working to make the best decisions possible, nobody had a crystal ball as to what the future would actually bring. At the end of the day, lines had to be drawn somewhere.

If contemplating the purchase of a property for a business, and access to incentives is important, please contact the Village of Godfrey to see if the prospective property is in an incentive district.

Jim Mager
Economic Development
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Getting To Know Village Staff – Bonnie McNamee - Senior Purchasing Agent



One thing that Godfrey residents can be proud of and thankful for is the quality of the streets and roads within the Village. In general, the Public Works Department keeps the byways in good quality and passable.

A key person to making sure things run smoothly in the Department is Bonnie McNamee. She has a big job with lots of duties. One of those duties is to develop and administer the Motor Fuel Tax (MFT) fund with the Illinois Department of Transportation. She also assists in the development and administration of the Village General Fund.

Bonnie works in bid letting and contract awards as related to MFT supported projects. All while entering street department bills into QuickBooks, preparing General Fund and MFT warrants and writing checks to cover street department expenses.

She prepares and maintains department records necessary for audits required at county, state, federal and union levels. Bonnie is also responsible for payroll records of street department employees.

In doing all the above, she handles the administrative duties for the department's office and acts as the Village liaison with citizens and their service request.

With a bachelor's degree in business and minor in marketing, Bonnie has been with the Village for twelve years. Prior to join-

ing the Village of Godfrey, she worked as a women's clothing and shoe buyer for two St. Louis companies.

"What I like most about the job is being able to work independently: and of course, a job challenge is working with a resident who is quite upset about something," said Ms. McNamee

Bonnie's personal interests are exercise and fitness, particularly after sitting at a desk all day.

Bonnie's contact is:
618-466-3133
Between 6:00 a.m. and 2:30 p.m.

Godfrey 311
Electronic 311
Smartphone App

Easily report potholes, broken street lights and other problems.

Call or email local officials, the police department, city offices and others.

Access activity calendars, receive village alerts and more.



Keep the swimsuits handy. Plans are to open the new Glazebrook Splash Pad around the middle of August.





Featured Business of the Month: Bob's Lawn and Garden

At a time when so much of the power equipment is purchased online or at the big box retailers, there are still a few independent dealers who offer personalized service including product demonstration before the sale, warranty registration at the time of the sale and repair services after the sale.

Rick Crivello purchased Bob's Lawn and Garden from his "Uncle Bob and Aunt Mary" thirty seven years ago. With the time his uncle owned the business: plus Rick's ownership, the company saw its 42th year in business last March.

Bob's lines of power equipment include Toro, Snapper and Echo. With those lines,

customers have access to a broad array of accessories, maintenance items and replacement parts.

Aside from sales and service of the quality brands offered, Bob's Lawn and Garden stays busy providing repair services to other brands that customers may have. Whether it be fixing customer's lawn mowers, log splitters, weed eaters, or chain saws, the company is there to handle customers power equipment repair needs.

Bob's serves a market that consists mainly of consumer power equipment. The majority of customers are homeowners in the Godfrey/Alton communities. Additionally, many customers come from surrounding communities, such as Jerseyville. Rick said, "We actually have customers who come over from St. Louis."

Bob's Lawn and Garden's competitive advantage is the level of customer service that is provided. For example, pick up and delivery of equipment that is purchased or repaired is a common practice. For many people who live in an urban area, this service can be very important.

Aside from Rick, there are three employees. Jerry Phelps and Stan Herron are the

service techs. Brenden Green works the front counter and sales. In addition to the employees, Monica, Rick's wife, handles the day-to-day bookkeeping.

Bob's Lawn and Garden sees opportunity in providing high-level customer service that is just not available from the major retailers. At the same time, a significant challenge is dealing with the current supply chain issues that plague many independent retailers across a variety of industries. "Right now it is difficult to get inventory in order to have product on the floor for sale," said Rick. One of the strategies being considered is incorporating additional brands and product lines.

After 42 years in business, what is next? "Things can be a bit challenging from time to time, but I love what I do. We're here for our customers," said Rick.

Bob's Lawn and Garden is located at:
6007 Godfrey Road

Hours of operation are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.,
Monday through Friday

Phone: 618-466-6922

Oh, and one more thing.....

The Village is pleased to announce the implementation of the Commercial Property Enhancement Grant (CPEG). The Mayor, Trustees and Staff are committed to the vitality of our business community. Our small businesses are encouraged to make use of this enhanced support.

You know, there is price and then there is value.

My grandsons are 12 and 10. I found out they started a little lawn mowing business in their neighborhood. Well, they were using an old push mower they already had. To support their entrepreneurial spirit, we gave them our self-propelled push mower. That way they could be more efficient and serve more customers. With that, we needed to come up with a new mower.

We checked out a big box retailer and Bob's Lawn and Garden for a new Toro. Of course at the box store, I could pull the unit off the shelf, take it to the checkout, load it in the truck and take it home, possibly limited assembly; and, hope there would be no issues once I went to use it.

At Bob's Lawn and Garden, the unit was fully assembled, serviced and ready to go. Just to make sure she liked it, my wife was able to take the mower out back and mow some grass. Because Rick took care of it at the time of purchase, I did not have to do the warranty registration. After ten hours of use, they will also change the 'break-in' oil and make sure the unit is in good shape. If the mower does need service, I have a place to take it.

The same mower at the big box store was about \$30 cheaper. As I said, there is price and then there is value. Please support our small businesses.



Jim Mager

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