



The Villager

September 2023

The Value of Shopping At Small Businesses

Volume 2, Issue 8

Special points of interest:

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“When you buy from a small business, an actual person does a little happy dance.”

That is one reason to shop locally, but there are many other reasons to support the businesses in your community. Here are a few more reasons to consider.

When dollars are spent locally, they tend to stay in the community. A dollar spent at a local independent store is re-spent in the local area as payroll, goods/services purchased from area businesses, profits spent locally by owners, and as donations to area charities. The study found each \$100 spent at local independent businesses generated \$45 of secondary local spending, compared to \$14 for a big-box.

According to the Small Business Administration: “The 2019 Small Business Profiles show that small businesses added 1.8 million net new jobs in the United States during the latest year studied. The United States has 30.7 million small businesses, and they employ 47.3 percent of the private workforce.” Small businesses are the backbone of our economy. They help push economic growth and the local economy by opening up employment opportunities locally to people who may not want to be employed by large businesses.

Small businesses are known to play a significant role in supporting local community charities and causes. It’s clear that local businesses benefit from a strong community, therefore the owners tend to be more engaged members of the community themselves. Small businesses donate 250% more than large businesses to local nonprofits and community causes, creating a positive cycle of giving back locally. This includes local charities, youth organizations, local first responders, local service groups and more.

When it comes to a small-business owner, all purchases, deals and positive reviews matter. Local store owners value each of their customers, and their very livelihood hangs on your own happiness. Unlike big chains, local businesses often hire people with proficient knowledge of the products they are selling or the ins and outs of the business they are running. Employees take the time to really get to know their clients and customers, making for an overall pleasant experience. Also, if you do have a quandary, rest assured you won’t be hashing it out with a robot.

It’s simple. In order for small businesses to stay afloat, they need to stand out from their big box competition. It’s this type of survival-of-the-fittest mentality that allows small-business owners to become innovative entrepreneurs—conjuring up avant-garde ideas for solutions to problems, creating new unique products and taking new customers’ specific situations into account when assisting with their personal needs.

The American dream is the theory in which equality of opportunity should be made available to any American, allowing them to achieve their highest individual aspirations and goals. Small-business owners not only believe in this dream but have actively pursued it. By supporting small businesses and shopping small, you’re supporting real, genuine people who have put their passion ahead of convenience and wholeheartedly believe in the business they are running.

Now more than ever, it’s time to encourage strangers and friends alike to shop small, support local businesses and ultimately fund a better tomorrow. (Source: Forbes Magazine)

Each month you can go to ‘www.gotogodfrey.com’ and register to win a \$100 gift card to one of our premier establishments around town. There is no obligation for registering; and, you have an opportunity to express your opinion on what you think would make Godfrey even better. The featured business for September is Josephine’s Tea Room. Register now!

The Village of Godfrey is providing a drop-off location for yard waste for Godfrey residents. The site, located at 1433 Stamper Lane, will be open and accepting yard waste on Tuesdays and Saturdays from 9:00 am – noon. Residents can enter the fenced area where an employee will then verify residency and assist in unloading the bagged yard waste.

Village of Godfrey Office of Economic Development

6810 Godfrey Road

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You can see your future from here.



Michael J. McCormick

Mayor

If you would like to receive the monthly issue of “The Villager” by email, please contact: jmager@godfreyil.org



The Great Godfrey Maze will be open Friday (6PM – 10PM) and Saturday (11AM – 10PM) ending October 28.

The Fall Festival is set for Saturday, September 23 (11AM – 5PM). This will include food trucks, live music, yard games, and the maze will be operating that day as well. The day will be a good opportunity for families to have some fun at an affordable price.

2023 Maze Admission

- Adults (12 & Up) \$7.00
- Children (6-11) \$5.00
- Children 5 & Under FREE

Maze & Haunted Maze

- Adults (12&Up) \$9.00
- Children (6-11) \$7.00
- Children 5 & Under FREE

Individual Attractions

- Cow Train \$2.00
- Jumping Pillow \$2.00
- Wagon Rides \$2.00
- All-Day Inflatables \$12.00
- Corn Crib Free (11 & Under)

Combo Pricing

- Adults (12 & Up) \$12.00
- Children (6-11) \$10.00
- Unlimited Combo \$20.00

Souvenirs

- Souvenir Shirt 1 for \$20.00 or 2 for \$35.00
- Past Year's Shirts 1 for \$3.00 or 2 for \$5.00
- Glow Glasses \$5.00
- Flashlights \$3.00
- Scout Patch \$2.00
- Glow Necklace \$1.00
- Glow Sticks \$1.00
- Glow Bracelets \$0.50



Back In The Saddle will be performing at the Fall Festival, Sept. 23 from 2:30 to 4:30.

Economic Development Project Updates



The Godfrey-owned lots just south of Scooters have been sold. The purchaser has a specified amount of time to develop the property and place the property in use toward an acceptable commercial enterprise.



The property at Godfrey Road and Stamper Lane (former Halloran property) is owned by a St. Louis developer. Current development is deeding part of the property to the Village so that Stamper Lane can be extended to provide for future development.



The Village of Godfrey Board of Trustees have approved a liquor license to Top Shelf Wine and Spirits to develop a Godfrey Location. The challenge is finding an acceptable location on Godfrey Road for the establishment.



A new insurance office is being constructed by Blake Sonka, State Farm, at 3052 Godfrey Road. The old residential structure was razed to make way for a new office building.



Mayor McCormick presents Sammy Desai, owner of the Godfrey BP, a commemorative plaque for being Godfrey's June Featured Business of the Month. The Godfrey BP is located at 1918 West Delmar.

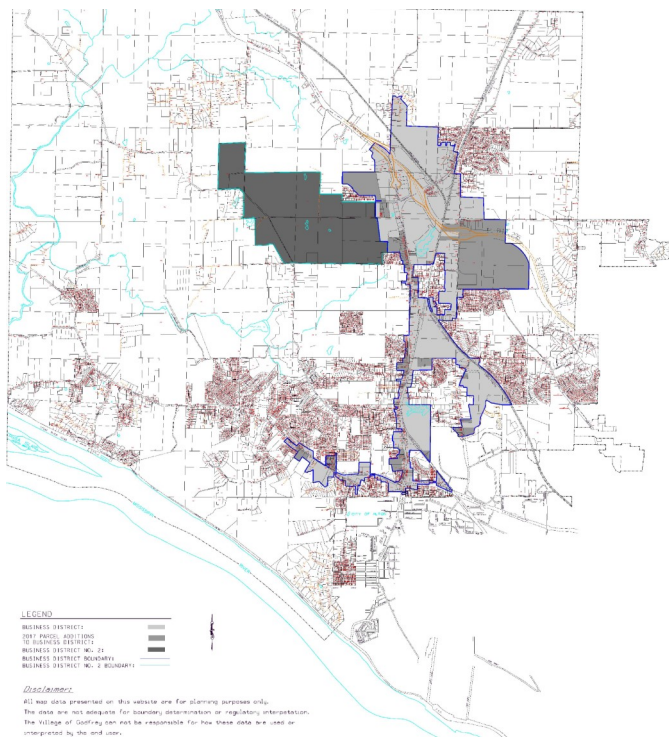
Hours are 5:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. and they are open until 11:00 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays.

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- Chris Logan, Park and Rec 618-466-1483
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- Susie Stephan, Animal Control 618-466-5211
- Police Non-Emergency Dispatch 618-692-4433

How the Godfrey Business District Functions



VILLAGE OF GODFREY
BUSINESS DISTRICT LAYOUT

<https://godfreyil.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/2018-Business-District-Map.pdf>

In 2017, the Village of Godfrey established a Business District designed to enhance the economic development of the area along Godfrey Road and West Delmar.

A Business District is created to impose an additional sales tax or hotel tax, designed to fund the development or redevelopment of certain designated blighted areas within a municipality. This is generally done to assist in improvements of public infrastructure necessary for commercial development projects.

To get a basic understanding of how this tool works, it is important to understand sales tax. Generally speaking, the base sales tax rate for communities is 6.85%. The State of Illinois captures 5%, the County captures .25% and the community captures 1% of all sales. Under the Business District Law, communities can impose an additional sales tax in .25% increments up to 1% within a defined area. Thus, the community can increase the sales tax up to 7.85%, or 1% more than the normal tax rate. That 1% can be used to rebate a developer for eligible development costs, including infrastructure improvements, or it can be captured by the community and utilized for public works, infrastructure and other costs within the Business District Area.

To establish a Business District, the community must be able to designate the Area to need development and findings must be made similar to a TIF District to support the 'blight' analysis. However, since revenues come from sales and hotel taxes, and not property taxes (as in a TIF), there is rarely an instance where other taxing districts are impacted in any way.

Business Districts generally work well along interstate highways and downtown areas. The focus should be on areas where the main shoppers/tourists come from areas outside of the community or areas where deterioration in a formerly vibrant retail area has kept the area from growing.

In the end, the use of the Business District has given numerous Illinois communities the opportunity to generate additional revenues and to secure new retail development that would not have occurred without the Business District.

Statutory Reference: 65 ILCS 5/Art. 11 Div. 74.3

Source Reference: <https://www.moranddevelopment.com/services/business-districts>

How Business District Funds Are Used

Below are some examples of how Godfrey has used Business District funds to enhance economic development in the village.

Businesses located in the Godfrey Business District are eligible to take advantage of the "Commercial Property Enhancement Grant" program. The first \$5,000 of eligible expenses can be covered with a grant at 50%; and, \$5,001 and above is 25% of eligible expenses. The grant limit is a maximum of \$20,000 per project. These funds can be used for facade renovations, signage, awnings, doors, windows. These grants have been utilized by numerous businesses.

Business district funds have been used to support the removal of derelict structures to make way for new development. Areas where buildings have been razed were the old Halloran buildings, the house where Scooters is located, the old Amoco station's cashiers building, the house where the new State Farm insurance office is being built, the old Hyway House, and the old car wash behind Quik Trip.

During the Covid fiasco, business district funds were used to support the voucher program. In that program, vouchers valued at \$20 dollars could be purchased for \$10. This program facilitated much need business to our local merchants and assisted residents by enhancing their purchasing power during a very difficult period.

There had been many comments by residents as to how dark it was on Godfrey Road at the MLK Express interchange. Funds were used to install additional street lighting in that area.



Whether in Godfrey or on your way to St. Louis, Bowers Towing & Repair proudly offers roadside assistance so your travel plans – whatever they may be – are not entirely ruined should something happen. Whether you're stranded alongside a small highway in the countryside or along the interstate, no one likes to wait for help. Bowers understands being stranded alongside the road is no fun.

Bowers Towing provides 24-hour emergency services. They respond to each call promptly with a goal to arrive on scene as soon as possible.

The company was established in 1974 by Todd Bowers. He bought the business from his mother who ran the Shell station on Godfrey Road and Stamper Lane. At the time, his mom operated towing services as part of the service station business. With the establishment of Bowers

Oh, and one more thing.....

A theme of the Villager is to encourage support of our small businesses. Those enterprises are a foundation of a strong community. Everyday we see the Prime, UPS and Fed Express trucks all over the place, and we know what their function is – to place the products we bought on line right there on our door step.

I know it is not an exact comparison, but there was so much grumbling as to why Chic 'n Pig closed..... that's what happens when small business is not supported. Once a Godfrey independent retailer is gone, it is gone forever, and it doesn't have to stop with Chic 'n Pig. I realize how easy it is to go to the big box stores or shop on line (I do it too); but, please make an effort to shop locally when you can.

For some of us, autumn is the favorite time of the year. As the weather cools and the fall colors emerge, our wonderful park system will be a great place to visit and enjoy. We are very fortunate to have such great parks. As the colors change, consider a walk down the path at La Vista, play a round of disc golf, and be sure to enjoy a day at Glazebrook Park's Great Godfrey Maze. Remember the Family Fall Festival at Glazebrook is September 23 – see you there!

Featured Business of the Month: Bowers Towing

Towing, the services of towing became the exclusive offerings of the company.

During Todd's ownership, the company grew to have operations in Godfrey, Wood River, Granite City and Litchfield. To make more room for operations. The company purchased the old "Hitching Post" tavern that was north of the current Godfrey facility.

The area of the former tavern is now used regularly by the Godfrey Fire Department training. It is not uncommon to see firefighters training on a vehicle, provided by Bowers.

Todd passed in 2010 and his wife, Kathy assumed the ownership and management of operations.

While Kathy had a desire to continue the business, she also wanted to operate the business at a level where she could personally manage the operations. With that thought, the business was downsized to only the Godfrey location. Equipment was also reduced from twelve trucks to four. Currently the equipment consist of two flatbed trucks and two tow trucks.

Services that are offered include, unlocking vehicles (lock outs), tire changes, medium hauling, unloading trucks for customers and other general towing. Services tend to

be focused on Godfrey/Alton areas.

Bowers Towing does not utilize answering machines. If you call, day or night, you will get a live person. The phone rings in the office and during hours when the office is closed, the calls are transferred to off-site phones where someone can get help your way.

To facilitate response time during weekends, an assigned employee will take a truck home with them for the weekend. This allows the operator to respond directly from home rather than having to drive to the shop and get a truck.

In order to meet the need of customers, the company has five employees that have undergone on-the-job training. When a new employee is hired, that individual works under the direction of an existing employee for at least two weeks.

Kathy Bower grew up in Brighton and now lives a block way from the shop. She feels that Godfrey is a great place to live and operate her business. "I think the Mayor does a great job, and Jim Lewis (Public Work director) has been very helpful to us," said Kathy.

If you find yourself in need of towing services, they can be reached 24 hours a day at 618-466-5367. They are located at 6204 Godfrey Road; and, www.bowerstow.com



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