



The Villager

July 2024

Special points of interest:

- Advantages of Infilling
- Family Fun Fest 2024
- Nominate a Good Neighbor
- Business of the Month—Second Hand Barrels
- Family Fun Day
- The Village of Godfrey's Support for Small Businesses
- Oh, and one more thing...

Village of Godfrey Office of Economic Development

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You can see your future from here.



Michael J. McCormick

Mayor

Advantages of "Infilling" A Community



(a) Infilling



(b) Edge-expansion



(c) Spontaneous growth

Infill development is defined as the process of developing vacant, underutilized or abandoned areas in older neighborhoods, traditional downtowns, and central business districts or areas that are already largely developed. In most cases, infill development is cheaper than building on greenfields, offering sound economic returns to developers, while bringing economic, social, environmental, and public health benefits to a community.

With existing developed areas, roads, water, gas, electric, sewer, and data networks have already been paid for by the public or private sector. So, infill development makes good fiscal sense from both private investment and public expenditure stand points. (Attracting Infill Development in Distressed Communities: 30 Strategies (EPA, 2015), p.12)

Studies show that policies advocating more compact, mixed-use development could help increase property values and generate more property tax revenue per acre than those encouraging development on the periphery. (Minicozzi, Joe. "Thinking Differently About Development." Government Finance Review. Government Finance Officers Association. Aug. 2013)

Deteriorating downtown industrial properties are often regarded as community landmarks of historical and cultural significance and have the potential to become tourist destinations. (Essential Smart Growth Fixes for Rural Planning, Zoning, and Development Codes (EPA,2012), p.1)

Infill development, especially when it involves the assessment and cleanup of any environmental contamination, not only encourages reinvestment in nearby properties but also contributes to smart growth economic development for small cities and towns. (Framework for Creating a Smart Growth Economic Development Strategy: A Tool for Small Cities and Towns (EPA, 2016), p.31)

Infill development helps rural communities maintain their "rural character" while strengthening their economies. (Essential Smart

Growth Fixes for Rural Planning, Zoning, and Development Codes (EPA, 2012), p.35)

Most brownfields are in prime locations endowed with good access to major routes and transit networks, and within a walking distance of local communities. These features make brownfields appropriate sites for smart growth redevelopment. (Essential Smart Growth Fixes for Rural Planning, Zoning, and Development Codes (EPA, 2012), p.46)

An EPA-sponsored study by Duke University School of Economics concluded that when obsolete sites are remediated, local property values adjacent to the remediated property may increase. (Estimating the Impacts of Brownfield Remediation on Housing Property Values, 2012)

Environmental Benefits

Research shows infill development can reduce driving by bringing housing closer to daily destinations, relieving environmental costs of increased travel and sprawl. (Ewing, Reid, and Robert Cervero. "Travel and the Built Environment." Journal of the American Planning Association 76 (3). 2010.)

Infill development helps small towns and rural communities that are under growth pressure to conserve farm land, natural landscapes, and rural/small town traditions. (Putting Smart Growth to Work in Rural Communities, (ICMA, 2010), p.1)

An EPA-sponsored study by George Washington University found that for every acre of brownfields that are redeveloped, 4.5 acres of greenfields are saved from development. (Public Policies and Private Decisions Affecting the Redevelopment of Brownfields: An Analysis of Critical Factors, Relative Weights and Area Differentials, 2001)

Social Benefits

Infill development could be a response to America's changing demographics. While there is still demand for suburban lifestyle, a strong tendency has recently emerged, particularly among the millennials, for living, working, and entertaining in vibrant, walkable neighborhoods in historic downtowns. (What's Next? Real Estate in the New

Economy, (Urban Land Institution, 2011), p.9)

Aging Baby-boomers seek smaller homes with less upkeep typically found in infill locations. [What's Next? Real Estate in the New Economy, (Urban Land Institution, 2011), p.9]

New trends point to a sustained increase in demand for infill development, creating a market opportunity for developers:

- **Changing demographics and preferences:** In the next 15 years, the needs and preferences of aging baby boomers, new households, and one-person households will drive real estate market trends, and infill locations are likely to attract many of these people. (Smart Growth and Economic Success: Investing in Infill Development, EPA, 2021)
- **Employer behavior:** As more people choose to live in infill neighborhoods, employers will be following, and vice versa. (Smart Growth and Economic Success: Investing in Infill Development, EPA, 2021)

God Bless America



Thank you to the thousands of folks that came out for Family Fun Festival 2024 (it was one of the larger attended of this annual event). It was a beautiful evening at Glazebrook Park. There was a great variety of food trucks; along with bounce houses, face painting, balloons for the kids, several specialty vendors, an exciting watermelon eating contest and the annual athletic awards. The evening ended with a thrilling fireworks show.

The Mayor, Board of Trustees and Park & Rec are committed to bringing quality family programming to the community. Thank you for supporting the events.

Godfrey Seeks To Recognize Good Neighbors In The Community

Do you know an individual who has gone above and beyond as a neighbor in our community? Has the person, through selfless acts of kindness, made Godfrey a better place? If so, you can be the one to help in recognizing them for their deeds.

The Godfrey Trustees and the Mayor are initiating the "Godfrey Good Neighbor" award. Through the program, a person can nominate an individual who exhibits the extraordinary attributes of a good neighbor. A person who has been nominated will be contacted for their approval to be recognized for their community action.

The nomination form can be found at www.godfreyil.org. The form should be completed, saved as a PDF file and emailed to jmager@godfreyil.org. The undertakings of the nominated individual will be considered. If "Good Neighbor" status is determined, the person will be presented with a certificate of appreciation and featured in the Village of Godfrey newsletter and on the Village's electronic sign.

For more information, contact:

Jim Mager, Economic Development
618-466-3325
jmager@godfreyil.org

Don't forget..... Commercial Property Enhancement Grant

Businesses located in the Godfrey Business District are eligible to take advantage of the "Commercial Property Enhancement Grant" program.

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

Eligible Expenses: Significant facade renovations, signage, awnings, doors, 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.

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 for commercial use. Tenants must provide written authorization from the property owner for the contemplated improvements and participation in the program. If the tenant or owner who receives grant funding should close, move, or remove work financed with a grant within five years of grant date, repayment of the grant may 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. Application for the grant does require three bids. *The grant must be approved prior to commencement of work.*

When contemplating purchasing of property in Godfrey with the intent of commercial or business use, be sure to check the zoning of the property. It is also advisable to determine if the property is in one of the business incentive districts:

- Business District
- TIF District
- Enterprise Zone

The time to make those determinations is prior to purchase.

SHOP LOCAL.
EAT LOCAL.
SPEND LOCAL.

If you would like to receive the monthly issue of "The Villager" by email, please contact Jim Mager at:
jmager@godfreyil.org

Business of the Month: Second Hand Barrels



"Roll out the barrel, we'll have a barrel of fun." Not only can it be fun, but the right kind of barrel can add to the stylish décor of a home or office. Of course to maximize the stylish décor, the barrel needs to have the treatment of the folks at Second Hand Barrel (SHB).

SHB is a family-owned woodworking business with 3 generations of experience in crafting high-quality furniture and home décor. Their passion for woodworking began as a hobby and quickly turned into a full-time business

outfitting commercial and residential bar settings with barrel and steel inspired custom built products.

Ryan and Faith Jenkins own and operate the company. The Jenkins family history of woodworking began with Ryan's grandfather, Jerry Jenkins; a hobbyist woodworker, and extremely influential man in Ryan's life. Ryan learned his skills from his grandfather while working next to him in the shop.

The company began in 2011 as a home-based business. Starting in a single car garage, Ryan Jenkins bought two barrels from a cousin who worked for Dr. Pepper. The majority of Ryan's adult life has been employed in commercial sales. On the weekends, he enjoyed "flipping" things; cars, boats and eventually whiskey barrels. A friend traded Ryan two whiskey barrels to flip and before the weekend was up, he had garnered thousands of emails with requests and interest. Ryan had stumbled onto something amazing. Geared with his grandfather's influence and creativity, as well as wife Faith Jenkins' support, Ryan knew this was bigger than just a thought. He traveled the Kentucky Hills searching for barrels. Load by load, Second Hand Barrel Co. was created.

The home-based status of the business continued to grow. In 2021 the company moved to 3808 Stanka Lane (the former home of White's Nursery). That move was the official start of the business as it is known today.

Ryan and Faith have built the company on relationships. The marketing effort is based upon treating people well, just visiting and getting to know people. For example, eight years ago, a person from an exclusive St. Louis retailing company came to Ryan to buy some barrels. Four years later that retailer decided to handle some of SHB's custom products. Such experiences and word of mouth reputation has resulted in the company's marketing success. The company does have a website, but they find that being on Facebook has been the most effective way to interact with customers and to tell their story.

SHB makes use of gorilla marketing by coming up with creative ways to sell themselves. "When the kids were younger and would go trick or treating, we'd have them hand out business card when they got their candy," said Ryan.

SHB strives to provide customers with exceptional and personalized service and custom products that exceed expectations. Their goal is to create functional and trend-setting hardwood products and design.

The enterprise is truly a family owned and operated business. Ryan and Faith are in the shop everyday. Their children spend a great deal of time there. Niece Hannah played a great part in helping

produce earlier projects, and ultimately earned enough money to buy her first vehicle in cash. Ryan said, "She was a huge part of supporting our growth into the Stanka Lane operation and really learned a great work ethic from the experience." She loves being able to be such a hands-on part of her family's legacy.



Sons Benjamin and Noah can also be found in the shop, hanging out in their own "Kids Lounge." Creating the lounge has allowed the family to spend more quality time together. Benjamin is also becoming entrepreneurial by designing products from barrel hoops and selling them. Family friend Brandon Feezel rounds out the operations by working in the shop and doing installs of custom designed products and services.

A challenge that is being faced by SHB is finding a supply of bourbon barrels. With the growth of craft beers, the bourbon barrels are being repurposed to accommodate the brewing industry. Once the barrels have been used for brewing, they are less desirable for SHB's purposes.

As the company continues to grow, so does the shop and the equipment needed to do so. While the products are steeped in classic woodworking craftsmanship, "We want to grow the legacy of the business by mirroring our products with modern woodworking technology," said Ryan. In addition to equipment, the company continues to expand the square footage of manufacturing space.

While the company does sell and ship products across the country, the majority of its market is regional. Most sales tends to be within a 150 radius. For those who live locally and are looking for a unique and stylish décor, check out Second Hand Barrels. They can be found at:

**3808 Stanka Lane, Godfrey, Illinois 62035, United States
618-960-6994**

RyanSHBCO@Gmail.com

**Tuesday thru Saturday — 9:00 am – 5:00 pm
Sunday and Monday — Closed**

www.facebook.com/secondhandbarrels



The Village of Godfrey's Support for Small Businesses



When operating a small business, there are always head winds. If owning a business was easy a lot more people would be doing it. A central part of operating in a business climate is managing risks and maximizing strengths and opportunities.

Last month the State Of Illinois passed the largest budget in state history. The budget included \$700,000 in new taxes. More than \$1.1 billion in added revenue was needed to balance the books, so lawmakers extended an expiring cap on corporate net operating losses to ensure that \$526 million in tax dollars wouldn't disappear in FY25.

In addition to spending and taxes increasing the costs of doing business in Illinois, two major pieces of legislation create additional challenges for operating a business in the state. On January 1, 2024, the Paid Leave for All Workers Act (PLAWA) allows workers to earn up to 40 hours of paid leave from work each year. Workers can use paid leave for any reason and employers may not require workers to provide a basis for their time off request. Workers earn one (1) hour of paid leave for every 40 hours they work. With inflation raging, the law increased labor costs for businesses by two percent.

On August 4, 2023, the Freelance Worker Protection Act (FWPA) (HB1122) was signed into law. The FWPA defines a "freelance worker" as anyone hired or retained as an independent contractor to provide products or services in Illinois or for any Illinois-based entity in exchange for compensation of at least \$500 (either in a single contract or in the aggregate of all contracts during the last 120 days). For small businesses who often utilize independent contractors to streamline their operations and reduce overhead, this legislation creates challenges for those owners.

Currently on the Governor's desk is House Bill 2161. The bill seeks to prevent discrimination by an employer based on an employee's family responsibilities. There

is real concerns, if made law, it will open up the door for employees to file frivolous law suits again employers. "We all believe caring for family is important, but this bill is another expansion of basically the ability to file lawsuits," said Ugaste. "And it's not even being brought by our trial lawyers, it's some national association, who is now giving ideas on what lawsuits they need to be able to file in the state of Illinois. Every business group is opposed to this and it's not because it's going to reduce claims or lawsuits. It's going to increase them. That's a problem for businesses and makes it harder for Illinois to attract businesses."

House Bill 5005 impacts tax credit programs for the film industry and research and development projects across the state, as well as for the Economic Development for a Growing Economy and Reimagining Energy and Vehicles programs. Opponents of the measure in the Illinois House said the bill is a tax carve out for large businesses at the expense of small businesses. State Rep. C.D. Davidsmeyer, R-Murrayville, said the legislature continues to tax small businesses and individuals so the state government can hand out big money to big businesses.

Then there is the increase in the gas tax that affects everyone. Taxes for gasoline will be 47 cents-per-gallon and 54 cents-per-gallon for diesel. The gas tax hike means Illinois drivers will have to pay an average of \$184 more per year on gas than they did in 2019. The increase is part of the Rebuild Illinois capital plan. In 2019, lawmakers voted to double the gas tax from 19 cents-per-gallon to 38 cents-per-gallon with annual increases tied to inflation.

For those who operate a small business; and, as well as those who work for a small business, it is understood how difficult operating can be. As a small business owner, you live the business 24/7. Every aspect of the business falls on the owner. Profit, selling, taking care of customers, making payroll and everything else falls on the owner. Yet, we count on our small businesses to be the backbone of our community. When it come to providing an environment for small business success, the above facts are can be challenging.

Godfrey is a community of small businesses and are a valued tradition of the Village. As such, Mayor McCormick, the Village Trustees and the Village staff are committed to creating an environment for operating small business and enabling entrepreneurship.

During the covid debacle, the Village established the Gift Voucher program to provide much needed cash flow for our food, beverage and retailing establishments. With that program \$400,000 in Village funds was committed to helping business. With the additional \$400,000 being matched by customers who purchased the voucher, it had an \$800,000 impact for our local businesses during a very difficult period.

The Village has also has the Commercial Property Enhancement Grant. Businesses located in the Godfrey Business District are eligible to take advantage of this program. It provides funding in which the first \$5,000 in eligible expenses can have a maximum grant of 50%; and, \$5,001 and above is 25% of eligible expenses. The grant limit is a maximum of \$20,000 per project. Eligible expenses are significant facade renovations, signage, awnings, doors, windows. Landscaping if it follows Godfrey Ordinance No. 15-2007. Parking lots if brought up to ADA compliance and Village codes. This grant funding has been made available to dozens of Godfrey's small businesses.

Godfrey commissioned Riverbender.com to develop a website specifically to highlight the many attributes and attractions the community has to offer. Local businesses' offerings and current events are presented to residents/visitors at www.visitgodfrey.com.

In further support of Godfrey's businesses, each month a business is recognized in the "Business of the Month" program. In that effort, a select business is highlighted in the Village newsletter, given month-long recognition on the Village's digital sign, given press in local media and presented with a plaque of appreciation which can be displayed in company's place of business.

The Mayor, several of the Trustees and staff have either owned or managed a small business. They understand the challenges that face a small enterprise operator. The Village's administration strives to be supportive of its businesses and to provide a business friendly environment. While operating a business in the state can offer some challenges, Godfrey remains a good place to do business.

Be sure and shop local!

Oh, and one more thing.....

As some may know, I am a professional musician. There certainly are varying opinions on how good I am at being one, but I can get people to pay me to play; so, by definition, I am a professional musician – but I digress.

Guitar Center is an American musical instrument retailer chain based in Westlake Village, California. It is the largest company of its kind in the United States, with 304 locations. Guitar Center and other online retailers have forced many small independent music stores out of business. Having said that, they do provide consumers an extremely large variety of products at very attractive prices. I have done business with them when I can't get something locally. In fact, I can order something from them and it shows up on my porch the next day. I don't know how they do it?

About a week ago, I was on the website of Guitar Center. They had the brand of guitar strings I use on sale for a dozen sets for \$39.99. That is a good deal. I was just about to grab my credit card and pick up the phone. Then I also came to the realization that I could buy those string locally and what is it that I'm always preaching in this newsletter? – shop locally when you can. With that thought, I held off buying the strings from Guitar Center.

A day or so later, I stopped into to local music store, Halpin Music to pick up the strings. In full disclosure, the strings did have a higher price, but I did not have to buy a dozen sets. There is price, but there is value. Let me tell you about the value being offered by this local retailer.

When I first arrived, I took some time to look at the guitars, amps and other equipment on display. Part of the fun of a musician is hanging out in a music store sampling gear. My next purchase might be a new stage piano. Before I dump several hundred dollars on a piano, I certainly want to be able to play it. I took some time to play the brands they had in stock.

After tinkering around the showroom, I grabbed the strings I wanted and headed to check out. The young lady working the counter, knew my name and looked up my account. While I was in the process of checking out, owner Mark Landon heard my voice and came out from the back room. He greeted me, shook my hand, asked how I was doing and we had a short conversation. When finished, he thanked me for coming in and returned to the back room to do whatever he was doing.

Halpin Music has been a mainstay in the community for years (I realize they are technically in Alton, but they are right on the border of Godfrey). I have done business with them throughout my career. In my experience, they will match prices with the big box/online retailers. When I needed guitars repaired, they've taken good care of it. In fact, the last guitar I bought from GC, had to be taken to Halpin's for a set up before it could be professionally playable.

Their presence in the community goes further than just my needs. They work with school districts across the region to facilitate the music education programs. For kids and adults who want to learn to play an instrument, they specialize in quality entry level equipment and lessons to help them get started. Because of the competitive pressure brought on by online retailers, they've had to adjust their business model, but they are still here. What would happen if they were not here?

There is price and there's value. What Halpin Music offers me and provides to the community cannot be supplied by the online retailers.

My point is not to rave on about Halpin Music per se, but to illustrate the importance of supporting local businesses. Please shop local when you can!



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What is going on in Godfrey? Go to www.visitgodfrey.com to get up-to-date information about all the things the Village of Godfrey has to offer.

www.visitgodfrey.com

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