

MAYOR REPORT – Cheryl Maguire, City of Wood River

2018 has been a busy year for the City of Wood River. After three years of waiting, the most anticipated event is the opening of our new 20,000 sq. ft. police station. Construction is on target for a November grand opening. The property, a reclaimed brownfield, was donated to the city by BP along with \$6.8 million dollars for this much needed facility.

The police department has been busy partnering with the zoning department on code enforcement by issuing warning citations when violations are noticed when officers are out on a call. These warnings expedite the zoning violations process, in order to get properties cleaned up. A new ordinance has been passed which allows the legal removal of abandoned vehicles. Another program about to begin is the licensing of landlords to educate them on how to help make our neighborhoods crime free.

It was another good year for home sales with 103 owner occupied houses sold, with several new home builds. Fulford Homes has purchased the Grandview Hills subdivision which has 82 lots. They expect to break ground within the next 30 days and their target market is young professional families.

Wood River has welcomed 16 new businesses some of which include Burger King, Fire and Smoke BBQ, Ironworks Auto Sales, Wheels and Deals Auto Sales, Lee Barrow Photography, Total Wireless and Imo's is still on target for a new build. There have been eight new ownerships such as Cleary Shoes, Wood River Printing and Schnucks. Walmart added a full on-line shopping and pickup service and Pumphouse completed another expansion and parking lot renovation, along with a pending expansion of Aldi.

Our Public Services has garnered several grants to upgrade our city streets. Work was just completed on a \$922,000 street and drainage improvement project from Edwardsville Road to Woodland. This grant was awarded from federal and county funds. Other improvement grants include \$550,000 for Phase II Downtown Streetscape, \$500,000 Phase II for Edwardsville Road to Madison Avenue, \$500,000 for both Phase I & II for the Wood River Avenue road improvements. All these are contingent of the funds being received and the construction cycles.

The Park and Recreation department just replaced the aging ceiling in the Roundhouse recreational center through a \$14,000 grant. The upgrades and renovation of Emerick Sports Park has had \$170,000 with grants and donations. The park will have a new playground which was originally installed in the 1980s and many added new features. The most enthusiastic support and endearing donation came from the late Mayor Leroy Emerick. Demolition is set to begin on the Aquatic Center with the ground EPA approved for any future possible construction.

A challenge for the city has been assessing what programs the residents of Wood River would like to see happen and how to fund these projects. Beginning in July, the city held many public meetings to get citizen input. The city council is placing priorities on these desired projects and looking at funding options for their implementation.

In spite of the challenges, Wood River is progressing with several businesses making contact and viewing possible locations at the Envirotech Park and at I-255. As mayor, I am looking forward to what 2019 will bring.

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