

Transfer of Township Roads = Local Control

A THRIVING COMMUNITY

Incorporated as a village in 2001, Homer Glen ranks among the newest municipalities in Illinois. Unlike other towns that started small and eventually grew, Homer Glen started big and continues to grow quickly.

As the largest municipality in Homer Township, Homer Glen accounts for 61 percent of land, and our residents fund 63 percent of the Road District's budget.

Because of its large size when it formed nearly 20 years ago, the Village didn't have the capability to quickly create a new public works department that could service its vast network of existing streets, nor did it have the resources to purchase new vehicles, acquire storage facilities and hire workers. Instead, the Village employed a cost-saving approach, entering into an intergovernmental agreement that called for the Homer Township Road District to maintain, repair, and plow Homer Glen streets – just as it had been doing – with Village residents paying for those services.

While the agreement, which continues to exist today, has worked well for both the Village and the Road District, Homer Glen is now a thriving community that needs its own professional public works department – which is accountable to its residents, its taxpayers, and the Village.

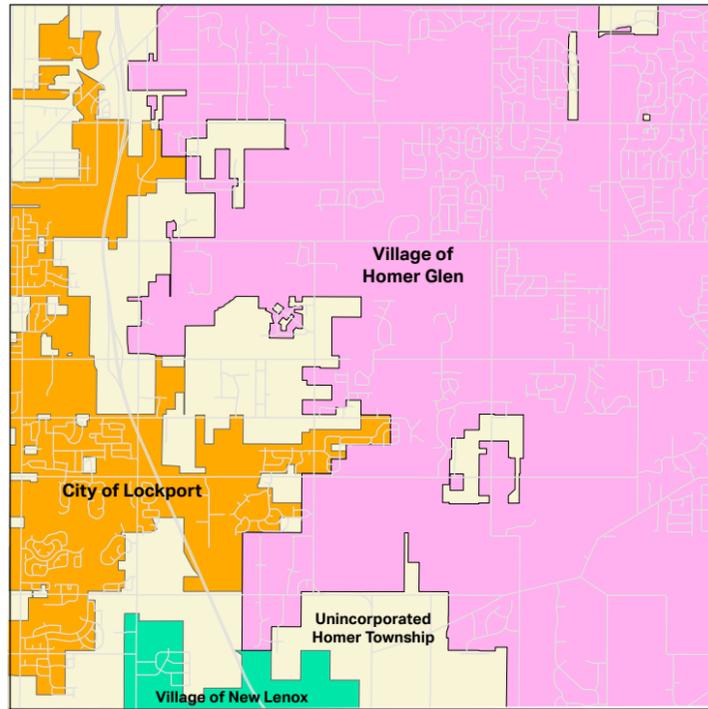
THE NEED FOR A PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

By establishing its own public works department, Homer Glen would not only streamline services and benefit taxpayers in the long run, but it would also protect and insulate Village residents from uncertainty and differences between jurisdictions that could prove costly in the future. Consider these facts:

- Homer Glen is the largest Illinois municipality that is dependent on a Township Road District department to oversee its roads. The other villages within the Township – Lockport, Lemont, and New Lenox – each have their own public works departments despite their smaller sizes.
- Of the 153 miles of roads maintained by the Road District, 135 of them are owned by Homer Glen. Yet the Village has no power over the Township Road District's budget or control over how funds are allocated.
- Homer Glen is vulnerable because the existing intergovernmental agreement can be nullified by either party with only one year's notice, and that could potentially cost Village taxpayers significantly more to cover services, buy equipment and hire workers in a short period of time. Simply stated, the Village wants to control its own destiny.
- The City of Lockport comprises 20 percent of Homer Township and only 47 out of its 233 miles of roads. Yet the Township's Road District collects taxes from Lockport residents who also reside in Homer Township (approximately \$800,000 dollars annually) to help maintain Homer Glen's roads. Lockport residents are essentially taxed twice because they pay to fund both the Township Road District and the City of Lockport's public works department.

ACHIEVING ACCOUNTABILITY

Just as other municipalities have done, Homer Glen intends to pursue



HOMER TOWNSHIP BOUNDARY MAP

consolidating the Township Road District into the Village through a "transfer of stewardship."

Under this transfer, the existing assets will shift from the Road District to the Village of Homer Glen. The Village will also agree to maintain the 18 miles of roads in the unincorporated parts of the Township in the future, so no areas are neglected.

The transfer of assets – the equipment and buildings – will allow taxpayers to assume the responsibility without having to pay for a new public works department, created from the ground up. Establishing a new public works department from scratch is estimated to cost the taxpayers more than \$15 million, and they will lose out on what they have already funded during the last 20 years.

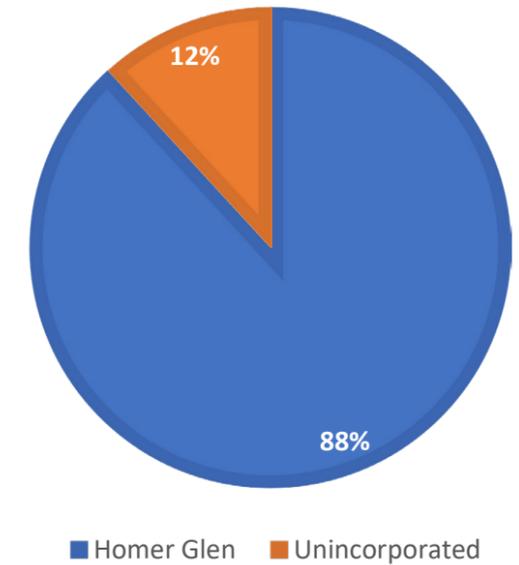
The Township's Road District Commissioner, Mike DeVivo, is in full support of the transfer of his department to the Village, believing the transfer is best for ALL Village and Township taxpayers. The consolidation of services will result in taxpayer savings and create efficiencies that could potentiall drive down taxes in the future. Meanwhile, the Homer Glen Village Board unanimously approved a resolution endorsing the transfer.

NOVEMBER 3 REFERENDUM ON ELECTION BALLOT

When Homer Glen and the Road District Commissioner met with the Township Supervisor and proposed the transfer of stewardship to the Village, Township officials decided to place a referendum on the November 3 election ballot asking voters to abolish the Road District and grant control to the Township.

If the referendum is approved, the Township will take total authority of the roads from the Road District and could refuse to allow the transfer of stewardship to occur. If that happens, the Village will need to create an intergovernmental agreement with the Township, or pay to create a new public works department from the ground up, costing millions of dollars in equipment and property, and ultimately costing Village taxpayers significantly more

MILES MAINTAINED BY HOMER TOWNSHIP ROAD DISTRICT



The Village of Homer Glen is the largest investor and owner of Homer Township Road District's operations and assets, yet has no direct legal authority or input over the Road District.

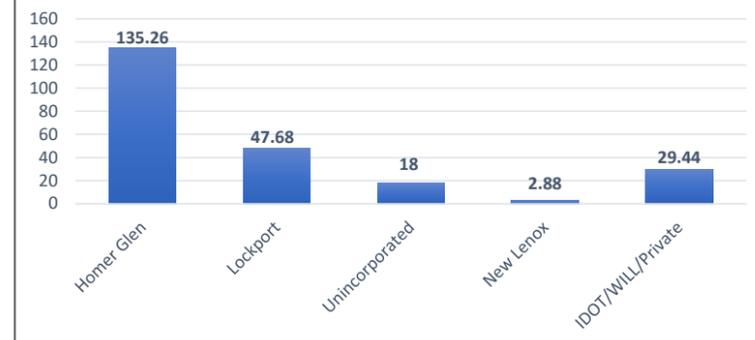
money. Meanwhile, taxpayers throughout Homer Township (Homer Glen, Lockport, New Lenox, and Lemont) would still be taxed for the few miles of road the Township would be responsible for in the unincorporated areas.

be managed and led by the Village and accountable to its residents. Furthermore, taxpayers in Lockport, New Lenox, and Lemont will no longer have to pay taxes to the Township for roads that exist outside of their towns.

If the referendum is voted down, the Village will begin the transfer of stewardship and create its own public works department – with the Road District's existing assets – which will

Regardless of the outcome on Nov. 3, the Village intends to move forward with the transfer, believing it's best for residents and taxpayers, not only in Homer Glen but throughout Homer Township.

Total Road Miles - 233 Homer Township



Of the 233 miles of roads in Homer Township, only 18 miles are located in unincorporated areas – or outside the boundaries of a municipality.

FREQUENTLY

ASKED

QUESTIONS

TRANSFER OF STEWARDSHIP

Why does the Village want to assume the responsibilities of the Road District?

Currently, only 18 of the 233 miles of road are located in unincorporated Homer Township. The remaining 215 miles are all within boundaries of a local municipality. Of those, 135 miles are owned by the Village of Homer Glen. As it continues to grow, the Village wants to have control and certainty over its roads - just like nearly every municipality in Illinois and in Homer Township - and not be beholden to another jurisdiction.

Is it common for Township Road Districts to control municipal roads?

No. Homer Glen is the largest Illinois municipality that is dependent on a Township Road District department to oversee its streets. Lockport, Lemont and New Lenox are all smaller than Homer Glen, yet each has its own public works departments, which are controlled by those towns.

Will the Village just take over the Road District?

No. Both the Village and the Homer Township Road District considers this to be a transfer of stewardship. In other

words, the residents of Homer Glen should not have to pay for something that they already paid for and own. Legal documents will be drafted that must be approved by both the Village of Homer Glen and the Homer Township Road District. Both the Village, which voted unanimously in September, and the Road District Commissioner support this transfer.

Why can't the Village just create their own Public Works Department without involving the Road District?

Creating a brand new public works department will cost millions of dollars, and the same taxpayers of Homer Glen have already paid for the Road District's equipment and land for the past 20 years.

Who controls the roads within the Village of Homer Glen?

The Homer Township Board controls the budget and property tax levy that supports the Road District. The Road District controls the condition of the roads, including snow plowing, repairs, mowing, etc. The Village of Homer Glen has no control of the roads, even though they are owned by the Village.

What happens to the 18 miles of unincorporated roads that the road district currently oversees?

The Village has offered to maintain, via an intergovernmental agreement, the remaining unincorporated roads within the Township, at no cost to the unincorporated residents, in perpetuity or until these areas are annexed into the boundaries of a nearby town.

What happens if the Homer Township Board wants to keep control of their 18 miles of unincorporated roads?

They will need to continue to tax all of the properties located within Homer Township to pay for the 18 miles of

roads. The Homer Township Road Commissioner has estimated this will cost approximately \$500,000 annually. While the Village of Homer Glen does not support this decision, the decision rests solely with the Homer Township Board.

Why should Homer Township residents who live in Lockport, New Lenox and Lemont care about this?

For Homer Township residents who reside in Lockport, New Lenox and Lemont, they will no longer pay taxes to a road district that does not maintain the streets where they live. Under the proposed agreement, Homer Glen has agreed to maintain the small number of unincorporated roads, which will result in lower tax bills for Homer Township residents who reside in Lockport, New Lenox, and Lemont.

What are the steps involved in the transfer?

After the transfer of assets from the Homer Township Road District to the Village of Homer Glen occurs, the current intergovernmental agreement would be terminated, and the Village will create its own public works department. The Homer Township Road District tax levy would be eliminated and will no longer appear on the tax bills of township residents. The Village will adopt a new tax levy that will appear on the tax bills of Homer Glen residents.

How does the November 3 referendum impact the Village?

The ballot referendum that the Homer Township Board - without input from the Homer Glen Village Board - placed on the November 3 ballot calls for the Township Supervisor and the Board of Trustees to take over all of the duties and authorities of the Road District Commissioner and effectively renders the Village Mayor and Trustees inconsequential.

Will I have to pay taxes to the Village and Road District?

No. The taxes you pay to the Road District will be eliminated. However, if the Township decides to continue to maintain the 18 miles of their roads, Homer Glen residents would be required to pay property taxes to both the Village and the Homer Township.

Would Homer Glen increase the tax levy?

No. The levy from the Homer Township Road District would be eliminated and it is anticipated the same levy would be imposed by the Village of Homer Glen under the new public works department.

How will this impact my overall tax bill?

If you live in Homer Glen, your taxes will rise slightly. Although the Village will not increase the levy, only Homer Glen residents will pay it. By contrast, the levy amount that is currently spread across all Homer Township residents - which includes Homer Glen, Lockport, New Lenox, Lemont and unincorporated Homer Township - will no longer have to be paid by those residents. The village estimates that keeping the levy the same, would result in an approximately \$57 increase per \$100,000 of Home Market Value.

Is Homer Glen going to hire the current Road District Commissioner as its Public Works Director?

No. Current Township Road District Commissioner Mike DeVivo plans to retire and is not seeking re-election. The Village and Commissioner DeVivo will continue to work together while the transfer takes place.

What will happen to the existing employees at the Road District?

They will have an opportunity to apply for jobs with the Homer Glen

Public Works Department. The Village anticipates those that desire to work for the Village, would be re-hired to work in the public works department.

How does the Village plan to educate and reach out to residents?

The Village will continue to reach out and engage with the Township and all other stakeholders in a collaborative way. We fully recognize the needs and concerns of all of the Township residents will need to be heard and addressed and invite everyone to participate in this process moving forward. There are many steps that still need to be undertaken before any plans are finalized. Both the Village and the Road District intend to hold meetings with impacted employees, residents and taxpayers in the coming weeks and months. The transfer of stewardship will be an open and transparent process. This is both the Village's and the Homer Township Road District's commitment to our residents that we serve. We believe that if we can work together, this process will be a victory for everyone involved.

If you missed the informational meetings the Village held on October 6 and 12 about this topic and have more questions for us, call Village Hall at 708-301-0632 or send an email to Village Manager Karie Friling at kfriling@homerglenil.org

