

October 12, 2020

Dear Homer Glen Residents,

Having the honor to proudly serve as Homer Glen's first Mayor for two terms and having lived in Homer Township for nearly 35 years, my ties to the Village and its residents run deep.

Almost 20 years ago, I worked with the community to lay the groundwork for incorporating Village boundaries that officially established Homer Glen as a Village. By doing so, we – as residents – achieved the power to rein in urban sprawl and control our own destiny as a municipality. That allowed the community to manage new commercial and residential growth and development in Homer Glen and enabled us to preserve the best of our rural past through a government that was accountable to the people it served.

Upon forming the Village in 2001, our shared vision was that Homer Glen would gradually mature and grow at a pace residents preferred. From the very start, one of our top priorities was to eventually form the Village's own public works department by transferring the responsibilities and maintenance of our streets to the Village from the Homer Township Road District.

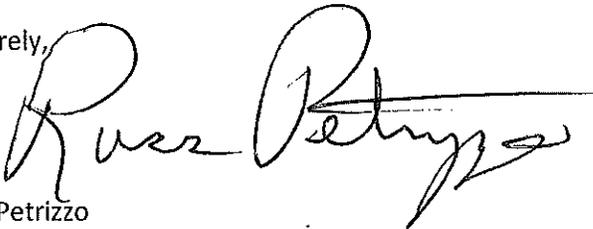
After nearly 20 years, the timing is finally right to do just that. The Village comprises 89 percent of the roads maintained by Township Road District. These are roads located in Homer Glen that the Village – more specifically taxpayers – own. Meanwhile, Village residents have been paying taxes to fund the Road District, including the purchasing of trucks and equipment and paying staff salaries. Homer Glen's Village Board is in full support of the transfer and the Township's Road District Commissioner – whose own job will be eliminated by the transfer – believes it is in the best interest of our residents.

On the other hand, enabling the Township to control our Village's streets, creates uncertainty, which could end up costing taxpayers more in the long run. If Homer Township has its way and takes control of our roads, it could end the intergovernmental agreement with Homer Glen within one year, leaving the Village to build a new public works department from the ground up, which means buying new equipment, purchasing property and hiring new workers – all of which would cost residents millions in taxes. This is a risk we cannot afford.

Every other municipality in Homer Township (Lockport, Lemont, New Lenox) and most every municipality in Illinois maintains its streets with its own public works department – for good reason. Just like we did two decades in forming the Village, we must control our own destiny and not let others dictate our future for us. The Village now has the capability and means to seize this opportunity.

To ensure this happens, **I urge residents to VOTE NO on the Township referendum that appears on the November 3 election ballot** and support the transfer of stewardship to move Homer Glen forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Russ Petrizzo". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Russ Petrizzo

Former Mayor, Village of Homer Glen
Former Trustee, Homer Township

James P Daley

Mayor of Homer Glen

2008 – 2014

As a two term Mayor of the Village of Homer Glen, I fully understand the importance of a Public Works Department for the residents of Homer Glen. It will provide the independence and security the village needs to maintain its infrastructure into the future.

The current Intergovernmental Agreement between the Village and the Township grants Homer Township complete control of the maintenance of our roads and drainage systems. This control includes tax levies, budgets, employees, equipment, maintenance programs, snow plow procedures and much more. The goal of the "Asset Transfer" plan now being proposed by the Highway Commissioner and the Village is to create a Public Works Department for Homer Glen and break away from the Township and end that control forever. That is why I fully support this plan.

The Township has recently placed a referendum on the November 3rd ballot that if successful, will allow the Township Board to extend that control over the Village by a Township Board vote. If you're asking "*will that happen?*" then consider this. At the last Town Board meeting they voted to sue the Village and the Road District; therefore, they are suing their own residents. That is why I'm asking residents to **VOTE NO** on the **Referendum to Abolish the Road District**. A **NO VOTE** on this referendum will keep the decisions regarding the Asset Transfer program out of the hands of the Town Board and ensure that this Public Works program will be successful.

It's time that the Village moves forward with this plan and become completely independent from the Township. Independence and self-control were the reasons we incorporated 20 years ago.



James P Daley



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Community and Nature . . . in Harmony

October 8, 2020

Dear Residents of Homer Glen and Homer Township,

You may have heard about the Village of Homer Glen's proposal regarding the "Transfer of Stewardship" between the Village of Homer Glen and the Homer Township Road District. As Mayor, I want to provide as much information as possible and answer any questions concerning this important matter.

The Village is seeking to create its first-ever public works department. In simple terms, it involves the transfer of the responsibilities and maintenance of our roads from the Township Road District to the Village.

While the transfer itself is a technical process, establishing our own public works department is of great importance, not only to Homer Glen residents, but to all of Homer Township. That's because it will: 1) provide greater accountability to Village residents and to the taxpayers of Homer Township; 2) enable the Village to have control over the streets within the Village that it already owns; 3) allow the Village to make decisions for its residents – just like most other Illinois municipalities – and no longer be beholden to another layer of government; and 4) result in lower costs for taxpayers in the long run.

For residents of Lockport, New Lenox and Lemont, you will no longer pay taxes for roads that your local municipality already maintains. For residents who live in unincorporated areas of Homer Township, you will no longer have to pay taxes for street services or maintenance.

Every other municipality in Homer Township each has its own public works department even though each is much smaller than Homer Glen. In fact, Homer Glen is the largest municipality in Illinois that is dependent on another jurisdiction to maintain its own streets.

Why is that? When Homer Glen incorporated in 2001, making it one of the newest municipalities in the state, the Village did not have the resources to establish a public works department from the ground up. A public works department requires: equipment like trucks and plows; staff to perform the work; and property to store the trucks and equipment. For Village the size of Homer Glen, those costs were significant, especially for a fledgling village.

As a result, the Village decided to continue its partnership with the Township Road District to maintain the streets under an intergovernmental agreement. The relationship has worked out well. But the Village has grown significantly throughout the years, and we are now ready to take the next step and operate our own public works department independently from other governmental entities like other municipalities

Homer Glen residents have been paying for the Road District's assets and equipment – and paying its staff – for the past two decades, and we own the vast majority of streets that the Road District

maintains. Of the roads that Homer Township Road District services just 18 miles out of the 153 are located outside of Homer Glen.

The transfer makes sense for many reasons but most importantly, maintaining the status quo puts the Village at risk. In doing so, we will remain beholden to the whims of an outside government entity that not only controls our funding but has the authority to tell us what roads to maintain, what roads to fix and what roads to plow. It also has the authority to nullify the current intergovernmental agreement and withhold funding in one year's time – leaving us little time to create a public works department from scratch that would cost taxpayers millions of dollars.

Our main goal in proposing this transfer of stewardship is to make it equitable for all stakeholders and township residents.

Currently, Lockport, New Lenox and Lemont taxpayers all pay the township road district to maintain its roads even though their local municipalities do the work. Under the transfer, they would no longer have to pay a "double tax." Homer Glen plans to reimburse those municipalities for the assets that their taxpayers have been paying into. Meanwhile, the Village plans to enter into an agreement to ensure that those 18 miles of unincorporated streets are maintained at no charge.

I understand this process can be confusing as there are many details. But our priority is to ensure transparency, provide you with information and answer all your questions. These have been the hallmarks of our Village since our incorporation.

Records matter, and you can judge us by ours. We run the Village responsibly. We operate efficiently and keep services streamlined with fewer resources and staff compared to other towns. And while the Village has grown quickly, we have no debt. We are accountable to you and our record demonstrates that.

This transfer will benefit: Village residents because it will establish accountability and eliminate any uncertainty in how Homer Glen will pay for and fix its roads in the future; Lockport, New Lenox and Lemont residents who will no longer be forced to pay twice for road services; and unincorporated residents who will no longer pay for street maintenance.

We will be communicating with you and providing more updates and details about the transfer as they become available. I encourage you to visit our website to learn more or reach out to us directly with questions or concerns at (708) 301-0632 or (708) 548-3268; or email Village Manager Karie Friling at kfriling@homerglenil.org or myself at mayoryukich@homerglenil.org.

Sincerely,



Mayor George Yukich