

# **2011-2012 NORTHFIELD VILLAGE CAUCUS PLATFORM**

Approved on January 10, 2011

## **Purpose**

The Village of Northfield Caucus Platform is a statement of the basic policies and goals for our elected Northfield Village officials and serves as a guide for administering Village affairs. The Caucus develops a platform with input from residents, which reflects the views and opinions of Village residents about Village administration. The platform is general in nature with the goal of maintaining the existing character of the village as a single-family residential community. The Caucus addresses specific actions or policies in the platform when they find a 60% majority (via survey or referendum) of residents support a particular action or policy. The Caucus expects Trustee candidates to concur with the Platform prior to slating.

## **A. Administration Strategy**

### **1. Representation and Communication**

The Village Trustees should fully inform residents concerning Village affairs through all appropriate means, including newsletters, press releases, promptly posting notices in public places such as the Village Hall, the Community Center, and the Library, the Village Website, and use of the local access cable television channel. Official notification, meeting schedules and agendas need to be posted

in advance. The Village Board should post approved minutes, in the same location(s), within one business day after approval.

Over time, changing circumstances may create new perspective and dictate approaches to issues different from those set forth in this Platform. Prior to adopting any such new approaches, the Trustees should solicit the views of the Caucus and the community at large concerning the implications.

Each Village Board Member should notify the Caucus in writing of their intention to deviate from policies and goals set forth in this Platform prior to voting on any issue relevant to the Platform.

The Village Board should actively engage other governments in order to identify areas of cooperation and coordination that improve services and/or reduce costs. Village Board should actively cooperate with the School Boards', Park Boards' and administrators on all park-related and school-related issues that affect the citizens of Northfield, including but not limited to traffic, parking, and any impact on neighboring properties. Any use of school properties should not detract from the existing character of the Village and its property values.

Village Board Members acknowledge their duty to follow the majority opinion of village residents; while respecting the rights of the minority.

## 2. Financial Responsibility

Residents strongly prefer that the Village Board: maintain a balanced budget and control costs, even to the extent of cutting services, outsourcing, privatizing, or partnering with other governments in order to avoid any increase in taxes.

Residents have indicated a priority and service preference for Police, Fire and basic Public Works services.

## **B. Planning, Development and Land Use**

### **1. Planning and Development**

The Caucus strongly encourages the Village Board, as well as its various commissions, to follow the Comprehensive Vision Plan, town center development and maintain the existing character of the Village.

Based on the 2008 survey, residents wanted more information about the town center development. They were in favor of mixed use, ground level retail space with office or condo living space in upper floors, taller buildings north of Willow along the Edens' corridor and family-style restaurant, specialty food and wine and ice cream. Residents expressed concern about taller buildings south of Willow Road.

The Special Use Ordinance protects village residents by defining the type of business and its location. As a result residents can be assured that inappropriate businesses are prohibited. The standards used to evaluate special use applications should be strictly enforced.

### **2. Building and Zoning Density**

Northfield should be dedicated to remaining primarily a residential community and any new development should adhere to the principle of low density. Large commercial developments, such as shopping malls or large chain stores are not appropriate for Northfield, relative to the size of the Village. Any further construction of townhouses or multi-unit dwellings should be limited. Any such building should be constructed in a style consistent with neighboring properties. Impact on traffic congestion should be closely considered before building.

The Caucus supports strict enforcement of all building codes and zoning ordinances, and encourages the Board to adopt and enforce setback and floor area ratio restrictions that are consistent with surrounding properties. The Board should adopt standards to regulate tear-downs or subdivision of existing

properties so as to maintain the character of the neighborhood and to preserve property values.

### 3. Traffic

Recognizing that Willow Road is owned and operated by the State of Illinois and that studies, recommendations, discussions and negotiations have been conducted among the interested parties for decades, it is the preference of Northfield residents that the reconfiguration of Willow Road be less than four (4) lanes.

The Village should continue to explore various means of enhancing traffic flow on all major thoroughfares and intersections. The expansion of the size and lanes of any road should be minimized. Pedestrian safety, especially children, is the priority of all discussions regarding all streets in Northfield.

### 4. Noise Abatement

The Caucus encourages the Village Board to continue to study and explore, in conjunction with other communities, the various means of reducing noise levels in the Village, particularly noise from Edens Expressway.

### 5. Drainage and Flooding

Replacing, maintaining and improving Village infrastructure for drainage management and flood prevention is a high priority for residents as well as an area of resident dissatisfaction. The Village board is pursuing studies and should continue to conclude such studies and take actions for improvements in these areas. Maintenance, improvement and situation response by Village personnel related to normal water and sewer services is appreciated by residents and should be continued. The Village Board should make improvements in this area a high priority.

## C. Resident Services

A majority of caucus survey resident respondents rated favorably (good to excellent) the Village services provided for police, fire, garbage collection and animal control. This is a positive reflection on the effort and quality of the work performed by all village personnel and the Village board should continue to manage its human resources in order to continue the existing level of professional service delivery.