



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WESTERN SPRINGS SEEKS EQUITY FROM HINSDALE OASIS BURDEN

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Western Springs, IL, April 3, 2019 - The Hinsdale Oasis is located over Interstate 294 at milepost 25, just north of Interstate 55. This location is immediately west of the Ridgewood neighborhood of Western Springs. As part of the I-294 central corridor expansion project, the current oasis bridge will come down, but some version of the fuel and rest stops will remain at their current location, on both the east and west sides of the Tollway.

The Village of Western Springs has long shouldered the full burden of the east side oasis, in terms of police services, sound, light, exhaust emissions, and litter - yet Western Springs receives none of the tax revenue generated from this busy highway stop. The oasis property was 'strip annexed' by Hinsdale in 1959, a process that has since been barred by the Illinois Supreme Court. Due to procedural limitations the annexation can no longer be legally challenged, but now is the time to consider the negative impact that the oasis has, and will continue to have, on local residents and community resources.

CLERK

Bridget Fitzgerald

MANAGER

Ingrid Velkme

Leader Jim Durkin recently introduced legislation to correct this longstanding disparity, and the bill has bipartisan support from Representative Chris Welch. When the oasis is dismantled, the infrastructure supplying water and sewer to the east side will be disconnected. The proposed bill requires the Tollway to conduct an assessment to determine the most economical means of providing utility services to the new oasis site. Such an evaluation would ensure the general public receives the lowest cost solution to these new infrastructure challenges. The bill also specifies that Western Springs would be part of the discussion regarding future improvements to the commercial properties at the oasis. In addition, the bill would also include a provision ensuring that Western Springs receives compensation proportional to the burden it bears.

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The tax income from the Hinsdale Oasis is reported to be more than \$500,000 a year. The Tollway expansion project, including the demolition and rebuilding of the oasis, provides an opportunity to negotiate a revenue-sharing agreement that offers a more equitable distribution of the tax revenue generated by the oasis. The Western Springs Board of Trustees is not asking to be made whole for failing to be compensated for the past sixty years. Instead, the Board is focused on the future, and righting past wrongs.

The Village Board is compelled to advocate on behalf of the residents of Western Springs for a share of future revenue proportional to the share of anticipated burden on the community. While legislation has been introduced, the Board would welcome an amicable resolution with The Village of Hinsdale that would ensure parity for each municipality.

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