



**NEWS RELEASE**  
**Community High School District 99**  
**North High School      South High School**

*Administrative Service Center*  
6301 Springside Ave., Downers Grove, IL 60516  
tel: 630-795-7100 fax: 630-795-7199  
www.csd99.org

Contacts: Jacquelyn Bridges  
Treacy Marketing Group  
(312) 482.8900 ext. 112  
jbridges@treacymarketing.com

Faith Behr  
Behr Communications  
(630) 416.3258  
Behrcomm@aol.com

**Community High School District 99 Agrees to  
Offer Property for Sale to Fund Capital Improvement Projects**

Chicago (April 12) - On April 11, the Community High School District 99 Board of Education agreed to offer their 45-acre property for sale, located at the intersection of Woodridge Drive and Center Drive in the Village of Woodridge. The sale of the property will assist with one-time, long-term capital improvement projects that will enhance the infrastructures of North and South High Schools. The decision to sell the property was based on a pressing need to address facility maintenance/improvement projects and the opinions of community residents.

The property was initially purchased in 1966 with the intent to serve as a third site for a new high school, as the school district's population expanded. However, due to an extensive enrollment study performed in 2004, projected growth of the school district determined that a third high school was unnecessary. In 1973, 1974 and 1997 district residents also voted against referendums that would approve building an additional high school.

In 1998, a referendum for additions and renovations was proposed to the two existing high schools. However, the referendum did not address all of the school district's capital improvement needs, leaving the district without proper funding for such projects as major site improvements at both schools.

To assess the opinions of the residents, a community survey was conducted in June 2004. The survey indicated that the majority of respondents believed that the land should be sold.

“A one-time event such as this should not be used to fund on-going operations, however, it is appropriate to use these proceeds for long-term investment purposes or for major capital improvement projects,” said Mark Staehlin, District Controller. “Property tax caps have caused all Illinois schools to consider alternative funding sources to meet organizational objectives. District 99 is fortunate to have an asset that can provide such substantial benefit to us.”

The proceeds will be placed in restricted funds primarily to be used for long-term capital projects.

- more -

**Community High School District 99  
Sells Property to Fund Capital Improvement Projects**

Prior to the decision to offer the property for sale, District 99 had generously extended the use of the property to various entities such as the Village of Woodridge, Woodridge Park District and the Village's Fire Department for community activities. The Village of Woodridge and the Park District have both expressed interest in acquiring the property.

“District 99 serves multiple villages within its district boundaries and the board must consider the needs of the entire school district rather than the interest of a single Village as decisions are made about financial resources,” said David R. Eblen, School District Superintendent. “In an era of limited resources, District 99 must make a decision that maximizes its revenue stream in order to provide the best educational programs for all the students it serves,” added Eblen.

Assisting Community High School District 99 in the potential disposition of the property sale is Newcastle Advisors, LLC. Newcastle Advisors, LLC is a Chicago-based commercial real estate advisory and development firm.

**About Community High School District 99**

Community High School District 99 operates two high schools, North High School and South High School, both in Downers Grove. The District 99 area comprises 45,000 households in Downers Grove and Woodridge and portions of Darien, Westmont, Oak Brook, Lisle, Bolingbrook and unincorporated areas.

**About Newcastle Advisors, LLC**

Chicago-based Newcastle Advisors, LLC is a national commercial real estate firm serving governmental agencies, institutions, not-for-profit organizations, corporations and private investors. The firm's strategic advisory, development and investment services are designed to reduce project risk and maximize asset value. To learn more about Newcastle, call Mike Haney at (312) 252-1401 or visit the company website at [www.newcastlelimited.com](http://www.newcastlelimited.com).

# # #

## **Community High School District 99 Property Sale Fact Sheet**

---

### **LOCATION**

- The property that Community High School District 99 is offering to sell is located west of the Town Center complex at the intersection of Woodridge Drive and Center Drive.

### **SIZE**

- The property totals 45 acres.

### **ACQUISITION DATE**

- The property was acquired in 1966.

### **BACKGROUND**

- The property was purchased with the intent that as the school district's population grew, this location could serve as a third site for a high school.
  
- District 99 retained demographer, Dr. John Kasarda in 2004. He conducted an extensive study of data (census, Village planning, birth rates, development activity, etc.) and developed high school enrollment projections through 2019. The projections showed the district's enrollment growing to approximately 5,800 students in the 2006-07 school year, and then dropping back to approximately 5,200 students by 2019. Historically, residents of District 99 have had several opportunities to build a third high school and they have always been defeated. Referendums were held in 1973 and 1974 to build a third high school on the Woodridge property, and both were defeated. In 1997, a referendum was held to build a third high school on the Woodridge property, and it too was defeated. In 1998, residents overwhelmingly approved additions and renovations to the current two high schools. The experience of the school district suggests that residents prefer two large high schools rather than three smaller schools.
  
- The property is being offered for sale for three reasons:
  - 1) The successful 1998 referendum for additions and renovations did not address all of the schools' capital improvement needs. There are 40-year old science labs at South High School, and 45-year old home economics and art labs at North High School that need upgrading. The Master Facility Plan did not address any of the site improvements needed at both schools.
  - 2) The June 2004 community survey indicated that a majority of respondents believe the land should be sold.
  - 3) Dr. John Kasarda's enrollment projections indicated that enrollment will not warrant a need for a third high school.
  
- The proceeds will be placed in restricted funds primarily to be used for long-term capital projects.

- Proceeds will not be used to:
  - Fund teacher or administrator salaries, benefits, etc. They will be placed in designated funds, none of which are designed for staff compensation purposes.
  - Restore the \$3.4 million recently cut from the projected 2005-06 budget. The budget reductions were needed to bring expenditures into line with annual revenue sources. If the property proceeds were used to restore the budget cuts, within a few years the proceeds would be exhausted and the district would have to resume with budget cuts.
  
- The district has been advised that Woodridge does not have right of first refusal. However, Woodridge may still purchase the property for its own use or future sale to prospective developers.
  
- A very small percentage of the property is designated as wetlands. The current assessment indicates that development of the site will include engineering that will reduce the amount of standing water on the site and also mitigate flooding to the surrounding area.

#### **BIDDING PROCESS**

- Community High School District 99 is under no obligation to accept any of the bids received for the property after the sealed bid is completed.
  
- The Village of Woodridge can not move to condemn the property as long as it is owned by Community High School District 99.
  
- Likely buyers include the Village of Woodridge, Woodridge Park District and residential developers.
  
- There are no development plans that will be considered until offers are received. The Village of Woodridge and/or the Park District are known to having an interest in the property, but their intended use has not been confirmed.
  
- Community High School District 99 will consider a sale of parts or all of the property.

#### **ZONING**

- A zoning change is the most likely long-term contingency. A 30-day period may be requested by the buyer in order to verify the accuracy of the due diligence materials.

- The rezoning process could take between 6 to 18 months and the construction another 12 to 24 months. Additional tax revenue is likely to begin by 2008.

- A zoning change is dependant on the offerer's intended use. It is expected that the Village of Woodridge will determine whether denser zoning is feasible based on what's in the best interest of its residents, the surrounding uses and the Comprehensive plan.

### **FUTURE**

- If the school district should require land in the future, it would seek to acquire it based upon its intended needs.
- It will not be known how much traffic a development will bring to the area until the intended use is made known. It is worthy to point out that had this property been developed for the use of a third high school, some 2,000 students plus another 300 faculty members and other building support people were anticipated to visit this site on a daily basis. This is the reason the collector streets were developed on two sides of this property.
- It is anticipated that more than a million dollars of gross annual real estate tax revenue will be realized by the development of this property and almost three hundred thousand dollars of net revenue will realized annually by Community High School District 99.
- The property proceeds would be used to fund one-time, long-term capital improvements. The land sale dollars would not be used for daily operations. If the Board of Education or community determined that school programs/services should be added/enhanced, a referendum would be one source of new revenue for these improvements. However, new annual tax revenue derived by putting the property back on the tax rolls could impact this issue.
- The cost of construction for the projects is likely to increase with inflation. These projects are needed now and it could largely offset any possible increases in the value of the property.

### **DEVELOPMENT**

- The current state of residential development in Woodridge is quite strong.
- Studies indicate that the greatest demand for housing in Woodridge is for empty nesters and seniors. This population segment will have a minimal effect on student enrollment.