



## New Generations

### Young & Growing Community

A recent analysis of census data discovered that the Village of Weston is where young families want to live in Marathon County. According to 2006 statistics a **whopping 69.7%** of the Village's population was born after 1962. That's right 9660 of Weston's 13,800 residents fall into the Generation X, Generation Y and Millennial categories with Weston's **average age equaling 31.7 years.**

Recognizing this fact, the Village Board proactively created the **"New Generations"** initiative aimed at meeting the needs of Weston's younger residents.. Each of the Village's standing policy committees (Public Safety, Park & Recreation, Planning Commission, Finance, and the Board as a Whole) will evaluate each program's efficacy on our young population. Their review will focus on the following components of young living in Weston:

- **Generational Involvement**
- **Delivery of Govt. Information**
- **Affordability**
- **Quality of Life**

### Generational Involvement

While making up close to 70% of the population, currently there are no "New Generations" members on the Village Board and only 10% represented on Village Committees. Village staff will partner with neighborhood associations to identify young leaders (ages 18-40) in the community and invite them to **"Future Weston"** - a six-week academy focused on public service. Academy graduates will be asked to serve a one-year term



on one of the Village's standing policy committees.

### Delivery of Government Information

Often referred to as the "two-click" generation, Weston's population is computer savvy and wants answers at their fingertips. The Village is currently implementing technology to meet the demands of young residents. In 2008, newly purchased GIS-based software will tie all Village decisions/actions directly to each landowner's parcel. The Village's state-of-the-art **website ([www.westonwisconsin.org](http://www.westonwisconsin.org)) is updated daily** featuring current events, municipal code changes, and other information detailing services provided by or in the Village.

In the spring of 2008, taxpayers will be able to receive their Focus newsletter by e-mail and an on-line chat forum will be created to allow for immediate feedback on critical issues. In addition, the municipal center will be **equipped with wireless, internet capabilities** for those attached to their Blackberry or laptop computer. In the near future, **web casts of Village Board meetings** will be offered to allow taxpayers to stay involved from the comfort of their own home.



**Convenience will extend to the ballot box** in 2008, when residents of the Sandy Meadows subdivision, Weston's youngest neighborhood, **will vote at the Key to Life Day Care Center** at the corner of Ross Avenue and Sandy Lane. This change in polling place will allow for a more timely voting experience and reduce the waiting time it takes to cast a ballot.

In addition, Village staff members will frequent **"third places"** (schools, stores, YMCA, athletic events) asking taxpayers their views on taxes, park & recreation, snow plowing, speed enforcement, or whatever is on their mind.



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## Affordability

The Village of Weston is very aware that the cost of government – property taxes – is sometimes a burden to young families. For this reason, the Village constantly reviews the cost of basic services (policing, snow plowing, garbage, etc.) in an effort to keep the tax rate low. In 2008, the Village will reduce its tax rate to \$4.91cents/\$1000 of home value under as a means of balancing out the current school tax levy and recent property revaluation. This represents 23 cents less than state statutes allows under current property tax levy limits and represents a permanent reduction in Weston’s levy limit. According to the Federal Reserve, an average Central Wisconsin family can afford a combined tax rate of \$24.50 / \$1000 of property value. In 2008, Weston’s combined rate will be \$19.87 / \$1000 of property value.



## Quality of Life: Business Development

Perhaps the most important focus of the New Generations initiative is the attention that will be placed on creating a quality of life that best serves the needs of our younger taxpayers.

From an economic development perspective, the Village of Weston will focus on recruiting business & industry that will be compatible with our young population. An emphasis will be placed on securing high-tech manufacturing jobs (especially in the medical and metallurgy sectors).

The Village will continue to actively recruit retail and business services that cater to younger buyers / consumers. Developments like the Weston Lifestyle Center featuring a variety of convenience options (like Dinner Helpers) have been targeted and placed in drive time traffic areas.

## Quality of Life: Neighborhoods

Developing clean, safe walkable neighborhoods is a priority with the Village of Weston. Beginning with a strict subdivision review and ending with developing neighborhood parks – creating a sense of place is a direct response to our younger generation.



Coupling with the Sustainable Weston campaign, neighborhood development will also focus on preserving green space, protecting

waterways and aquifers, and reducing noise and light pollution. The Village even has a “quiet ordinance” that prohibits construction noise after 8 PM to allow families to get young ones to bed.

## Quality of Life: Safety

Police and Fire Protection make up over 50% of Weston’s operating budget and much of the service design is aimed at a younger population. **RED ZONE POLICING** is a month long traffic control strategy that uses education (speed boards) and enforcement to keep Weston’s thoroughfares safe.

Children are also paid attention to through an aggressive program of child car seat education, bike safety, DARE training and an interactive Police School Liaison program, featuring officers at the Middle School, Junior High and High School.



24 / 7 full-time fire suppression and emergency medical service delivers a less than six-minute response time to the home.