

STATE OF THE BOROUGH ADDRESS
MAYOR WILLIAM PIKOLYCKY, WOODBINE
JANUARY 7, 2021

- I am honored to report to you my 31th State of the Borough of Woodbine, on this seventh day of this New Year, while wishing my best today for Orthodox Christmas Day (also known as “Little Christmas”) and only yesterday Los Tres Reyes, the Feast of the Three Kings. Most of all, my prayers are for a safer 2021.
- We continue to hold the line on the local purpose tax rate, and expect to do so in the year ahead **as** Woodbine continues to have one of the lowest local municipal property tax rates in the State of New Jersey.
- This is due, in large measure, to the financial successes the Borough has achieved in securing millions of dollars in county, regional, state, and federal grants and loans over the past year for community development, housing, and economic development activities that are contributing to the high quality of life for our residents, businesses, public institutions and visitors.
- I want to take a moment to reflect on 2020...which, as we all know, has been a year like no other and yet Woodbine was able to achieve many accomplishments.
- Over these many years, Business, Industry, and our Residential Community have benefitted from the numerous locally initiated/sponsored projects completed and activities undertaken because of the positive working relationship between the Borough of Woodbine and the Greater Woodbine Chamber of Commerce. The events of this past year and are no exception.
- This year may have been the most transformational year for the business and residential community with the focus on water, sewer, solar infrastructure; technology and innovation at the Woodbine Municipal Airport; and the completion of a significant community/recreation resource in partnership with the Cape May County Board of Commissioners (formerly known as County Freeholders) and County Open Space Board.
- The many years of preparation and successfully securing millions of dollars in grant funding and State designations such as Center of Place/Growth Area in the Pinelands has kept Woodbine in the forefront with our funding partners in recognition of the strategic planning that has produced so many positive outcomes for the Borough.

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- The Borough continues to be aggressive in its pursuit of grants from NJDOT, NJDCA, NJDEP, NJ Economic Development Authority, USDA, New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (NJBPU), and FAA. Projects include: airport upgrades, streetscape, roadways, drainage, water and sewer, infrastructure, traffic calming, right-of-way, sidewalk, bikeway, recreation, and related activities and solar energy.
- So much of what I have worked on along with Council over these many years has positioned the Borough of Woodbine to yield significant dividends. Now numerous projects are worthy of mention that are either under construction, under design, nearing completion, or have a strong likelihood of being funded in the very near future. To mention a few
- Department of Transportation in securing infrastructure/streetscape funds
- Department of Community Affairs securing funding for playgrounds & sidewalk programs as well Clean Communities/recycling grant. ADA improvements.
- Department of Environmental Protection on environmental cleanup/infrastructure, water treatment plant upgrades and water main extensions
- USDA for firefighter enhanced radio equipment, vehicles & building improvements
- FAA for airport improvements.
- Our success reflects positively on the decision making of our partners at the local, state, and federal levels to fund projects in Woodbine because they produce results. I am grateful to those partners and committed to continue to reward their confidence in our hard work with continued positive outcomes for our Community.
- We thank everyone who participated in the 2020 census, a civic duty beneficial when the Borough is seeking its share of Federal grants.
- Our tax collection rate remains strong, currently approximately 98%. One of many positive outcomes of our concerted efforts over the past year is Woodbine's ratable base which continues to improve as new businesses locate in town and existing businesses expand and upgrade.
- Out of every tax dollar collected by the Borough approximately 14 cents remains with the Borough with the balance distributed to our School District and to the County.

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- Woodbine again realized savings through our record of safety with the Joint Insurance Fund.
- Woodbine's Standard and Poors Global Ratings remains strong.
- The Borough continues to participate in shared services and public/private partnership opportunities.
- Our Tax Assessor and Certified Financial Officer come to us under shared services from Sea Isle and Avalon, respectfully.

Airport Activities

- The Borough is experiencing a surge in private sector investment and interest in locating and /or expanding at Woodbine Municipal Airport:
- American Aerospace Technologies, Inc, Sky Scape Industries (Unmanned Aircraft manufacture, service sales and drone services)
- Air Methods, Inc (medivac air/helicopter services); High Exposure, Inc. (aerial advertising)
- Northeast Charter Aviation (passenger charter services)
- Orsted, Inc. with interest in designating Woodbine Airport as the site for crew shuttle service during construction of New Jersey's first off-shore wind farm off the Atlantic City coast line.
- The Borough, working with Air Methods, is currently focused on establishing a JetA fuel farm at Woodbine Airport which will be owned and managed by the Airport.
- It is expected to result in an expansion of medivac services and interest from other private entities that will locate at the Airport with Jet-A fuel availability.
- The Borough and Senior USDA Representatives met to review a request for Rural Business Development Grant (RBDG) Funding of \$50,000 to develop a Redevelopment and Economic Feasibility Study.
- The goal of this study will be to assess conditions of existing World War II vintage hangars to determine feasibility of repurposing or demolition and construction of a redesigned hangar complex to accommodate small business ventures and promote growth at the Airport.
- Borough is in negotiations with Air Methods Corporation which is currently providing Medivac Emergency Helicopter Services out of Woodbine Airport. It is

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anticipated that the Agreement will see to the installation of a fully refurbished 6,000 Jet A Fuel Tank facility that will be financed by the revenues generated from Air Methods lease and fuel consumption (approximately 32,000 gallons per year over a four year period.

- Initial efforts to secure USDA Grant funding to support this investment have resulted in USDA's offer of loan assistance.
- If approved, Jet A Fuel Tank Installation could be completed in the first quarter of 2021.
- Woodbine Municipal Airport has been recognized by aviation experts with particular interest from technology firms involved in research, testing, training, sales, and marketing of vertical and fixed Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) commonly referred to as drones.
- Woodbine Airport's 'clear air' and logistical qualities make it an ideal research testbed as evidenced by the fact that American Aerospace Technologies, Inc. and its subsidiary Sky Scape Industries have established their headquarters at the Airport.
- The continued pursuit of State - NJ DOT Division of Aeronautics and Federal (FAA) grants has enabled the Borough to maintain the highest standards for this General Aviation Airport.
- These high standards coupled with the Airport's logistical qualities has resulted in Air Methods, Inc. establishing its base for regional medivac helicopter service here. Likewise, one of the Borough's longstanding tenants at the Airport High Exposure, Inc. and its affiliate Northeast Charter Aviation is considering plans for expansion of its operations which will include its aircraft maintenance services and introduction of passenger charter services.
- For example, just recently, representative from the global Danish Company Orsted met in Woodbine to review the potential of establishing Woodbine as a base for helicopter Crew transfers for the over 500 employees who will work off-shore. Orsted, the largest offshore wind farm company in the world, will construct New Jersey's first off shore wind farm off Atlantic City.
- We are optimistic that Orsted will join the growing number of businesses finding a home here in Woodbine.
- The economic impacts of activities at the Airport echo throughout the community in terms of increased sales in the downtown business district, our restaurants, and many service companies. All positive indicators. •

- We continue to work with the County Engineer on improving traffic safety including traffic calming. Scheduled for this spring is improvement of the County Route 550 with the Reconstruction of 550 between Washington and Monroe Avenue, with additional paving on County Route 550 near the airport.
- The RoundAbout on Route 550 & 610 has been completed.
- The New Jersey Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Master Plan has established a vision for New Jersey as a place where people choose to walk or bicycle with confidence and a sense of security; where both activities are a routine part of the transportation and recreation systems.
- The Department of Transportation has taken steps to fulfill this vision through the adoption of a Complete Streets Policy through which the Department commits to the planning, design construction, maintenance and operation of facilities that will provide for the safe access and mobility of pedestrians, bicyclists and transit users of all ages and abilities.
- The New Jersey Department of Transportation's Bureau of Safety, Bicycle and Pedestrian Programs (NJDOT-BSBPP) has authorized Sam Schwartz Consulting to provide Local Technical Assistance to the Borough of Woodbine.
- This authorization was based upon an application submitted by the Borough requesting bicycle and pedestrian planning assistance from the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT).
- The purpose of this Study is to provide an updated document expanding on the recommendations that were included in the 2008 Plan completed by Michael Baker Inc. (referred to as "The Baker Study")
- Using the information from that report and additional information provided by the Borough, the Study will identify new opportunities to enhance the bicycle and pedestrian network and provide improved multimodal access to the destinations throughout Woodbine.
- As part of this effort, Sam Schwartz will perform a bicycle level of traffic stress analysis, sidewalk inventory and assessment, bicycle and pedestrian crash analyses, intersection assessments, and develop mapping of regional bicycle facilities. The Plan would focus on the development of specific active transportation improvements and a plan for implementing the improvements.
- The information contained in the updated Plan will enable the Borough to target its grant efforts to those Programs that align best with the Plan's recommendations.

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- Furthermore, the Borough is hopeful that NJDOT will in the intense competitions, weigh more favorably those applications which represent a deliberate and professional assessment of need that conforms to the Plan and also proposes to implement projects in compliance with Woodbine's Complete Streets Design Plan adopted by the Borough.
- We are pleased to report that, in partnership with DCA's Local Planning Services, we have formally adopted our updated Master Plan. This well thought out Plan charts a clear course for the Borough's continued revitalization and growth. It also sends a powerful message to retail business and industry that Woodbine is a community built on solid principles for managed responsible growth. An application for the next step, which is the preparation of new Zoning Ordinances embracing the new Master Plan, has been submitted to DCA and is awaiting formal approval.
- Woodbine will soon be host to a ten megawatt community solar array recently approved by the NJ Board of Public Utilities.
- This will create a sustainable clean energy source in the Pinelands, will repurpose a former landfill and offer utility savings for our residential and business communities.
- This is another example of the Borough's proactive efforts to turn a liability into an energy producing asset thanks to a public/private partnership with Infinity and Nexamp, a subsidiary of Mitsubishi Corporation.
- Nexamp is a leader in developing and constructing successful community solar programs across the country.
- This year will mark the seventh (and perhaps not-yet final) year of Woodbine serving as a distribution site for the State's Tree Recovery Program. Woodbine is in the process of updating its Forestry Management Plan, for a twenty-first year.
- The County Open Space Board has entered into a Shared Services Agreement with the Borough that will provide the Borough sufficient Open Space funding along with a Borough match to retain the Landscape Architect to prepare design specs that will properly integrate Jake's Law Handicapped Equipment into the EcoPark theme. Once completed, Woodbine will be proud to host a uniquely designed Complex offering environmental educational opportunities and perhaps the most exciting 'park playground' experience unrivaled anywhere in the County or surrounding region.
- Funds will be used to integrate Creative Placemaking design elements into the EcoPark as part of the new County Open Space branding initiative. The elements to be incorporated into the Park would include shade structures,

decorative fencing, site furniture, trail and entry signs, wayfinding signage and Open Space Identifiers.

- Last year we received a grant from the NJ Department of Community Affairs of \$400,000 which will see to the construction of a Jake's Law All-Inclusive Playground at the EcoPark, an added feature that provides educational and recreational opportunities for persons with disabilities.
- This facility, which is immediately adjacent to the County Library Branch and our Elementary Community School Complex is also the nexus of three national and state trail systems: The Coastal Heritage Trail, High Point to Cape May Bikeway, and The Pinelands Byway.
- We continue to make improvements at the former Ambulance Corps Building which now serves as our Public Safety/Emergency Management Center, assisting with Emergency Management operations throughout Cape May County. This Building also serves as a Food Bank for distribution to food insecure families and individuals in Cape May County.
- With regard to public safety, we have received numerous grants from AFG, USDA, & DCA for our Fire Department to upgrade both equipment and purchase an Incident Command Vehicle. In addition, Woodbine was successful in securing grants from USDA and South Jersey Industries' First Responder Program to purchase dual band 700 Mhz radios to significantly improve interoperability among Borough and other First Responders throughout the County and surrounding region.
- Plans have been prepared and permits secured for a \$5 million public water system utilizing Federal USDA and State Infrastructure Trust funding to upgrade the Water Treatment Plant and to upgrade and expand the Borough's water distribution system.
- It should be noted that the iBank funding will also provide a major cost saving component; namely, zero percent construction financing for the entire \$5 million project
- At the same time, we are working on completing our Asset Management Plan utilizing a \$100,000 grant from NJDEP through the iBank program.
- Woodbine's partnership with the Cape May County Municipal Utilities Authority and the Department of Human Services, grants and loans totaling over \$4 million from USDA are in place for construction of the first phase of a \$20 million public sanitary sewer system program.

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- The initial phase will link with the CMCMUA's proposed wastewater conveyance system and the Woodbine Developmental Center, the Airport, and the surrounding commercial/industrial zones.
- Funding has been approved for both water and sewer projects.
- Woodbine is a rural community by definition and thus eligible for USDA Rural Development's Programs to address the same issues that larger urban areas contend with. We extend our sincere thanks to USDA. As you can see, USDA Rural Development has been an extraordinary partner with the Borough and has worked tirelessly to make available grants and very low interest loans, without which these projects could not have occurred.
- The Borough has been able to continue to carry out improvements to the Airport's air side components including runways/taxiways, and supporting infrastructure per the Airport Layout Plan. This is only possible with the support of the Federal Aviation Administration and New Jersey DOT Aviation Bureau. Total funding this past year was approximately 1.5 million dollars.
- In addition to those shared services already mentioned, our long-term relationships with Federal, State, and County agencies have resulted in our obtaining recurring grant funding for much needed and planned community and economic development projects. We are successful because of the value we place on these funding commitments and do so by carrying them on-time and on-budget with positive outcomes for our Community.
- I would like to take this time to thank our Federal and State Legislators and County officials who, by recognizing our needs and the importance of our efforts, have assisted us in obtaining this necessary funding by endorsing and supporting these projects that have contributed to Woodbine's managed, responsible growth. This is especially so with the aviation sector.
- Our County Library Branch continues to serve as an educational & informational Resource for many forms of media. Throughout the pandemic shutdown, it has continued to provide all feasible means of access including ongoing curbside pickup.
- Our Sustainable Jersey Green Team continues to work towards the goals of sustainability. I thank them once again for all their hard work and effort.
- Clean Energy is now making available another opportunity by which we can potentially make our streetlights and buildings more energy efficient.
- We also continue to hold our annual rabies vaccination clinic, supporting the health of our pets.

- Our Recreation Commission gave our children a much needed and safely distanced Treat or Treat event this year and partnered with the Woodbine Volunteer Fire Department for Santa's Ride Around Town.
- I again thank the Federally-funded Pathstone for its involvement in our community in assisting seniors through its training program. I thank all those who have participated in our community under this program, especially those in our municipal buildings.
- We recognize the Chamber for their commitment to promoting activities that will support business retention and new business attraction and also thank them for the generous donation they made to CASA. I thank the Greater Woodbine Chamber of Commerce and congratulate them on the immense success of their Eighth Annual Car Show, even larger than in the past. Please check out the Chamber website.
- Our Governmental Access Television channels 97 and 22 continue to provide public service announcements for the Borough community allowing us to notify residents in an enhanced format that complements our borough website.
- As I stated earlier and feel it is worth repeating, the Borough collects a total tax of approximately \$ 2.83 million dollars. Of that amount the Borough only keeps approximately \$ 410,000, which is less than 14.5% of the total. Thus only 14.5 cents out of every tax dollar collected remains in the Borough budget. The school receives 70.4 cents out of every dollar collected (over 70.4%), for a total of \$2 million, and the County (including Library and Open Space) 15.1 cents, a total of approximately \$430,000 (approximately 15.1%).
- Our ratable base remained stable during 2020 and our tax collection rate remained stable, due to the diligent practices of our tax collection office.
- Through best management practices and shared services, Woodbine has continued to cover municipal needs without any additional tax burden.
- Additionally, we continue to successfully obtain grant funding from federal, state, and other sources, allowing us to leverage our municipal funds to the fullest extent possible.
- The Borough continues to promote and ensure the quality of life, health, safety, and welfare of our present and future residents in a fiscally responsible manner.
- I would also like to express my appreciation to the Borough Council, our appointed officials and members of our Boards and Commissions, first responders, shared service partners, Borough professionals, dedicated Borough employees, and all those Committees who volunteer and lend their experience,

time, talent, and dedication to the improvement and sustainability of our fair Borough. My personal thanks to all of you and the very best as we continue to navigate through these unprecedented, inconceivable, times.