

# Wood River approves loan of up to \$1 million for quick completion of new police station

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WOOD RIVER – As the city awaits its final payment from British Petroleum (BP), the Wood River City Board has voted to approve the city seeking a loan of up to \$1 million.

Wood River Mayor Cheryl Maguire said the loan was simply to ensure the construction of the new police station by May of this year, which is also when Wood River's fiscal

year begins and the payment from BP is expected to reach the city's coffers. The land on which the new police station is being built was given to the city by BP as it was once the site of an oil refinery, which has since undergone extensive environmental cleanups. BP is also covering the cost of construction for a new, top-of-the-line police station.

When completed, the new station will feature more rooms for training and interrogations as well as a fitness area for officers to exercise. It will also have a sally port so police in Wood River will no longer have to transport prisoners over an open parking lot for processing. It also has a secure garage with the ability to hold vehicles as evidence as well. Maguire said it is perfect for compliance with the State of Illinois's consolidated 911 emergency centers as well.

As of now, Maguire said some functions of the police department have been moved to the new building, but it will not be completely ready for use until a new asphalt parking lot is poured – something that has to wait for the weather to break.

“We had some people come in over the weekend for a tour of the facility, and it was all very nice,” she said. “Everything was great until we stepped out into the parking lot, and that was a muddy mess. It needs a real parking lot as soon as possible.”

In previous interviews with Riverbender.com, Wood River Police Chief Brad Wells said the asphalt was intended to be poured by now, but said November's simultaneous cold and snow snap prevented it from occurring before now. He said asphalt creation and pouring only occurs in the warmer months, so he is hoping spring comes early in Wood River.

Maguire said the grand opening and public open house should occur by the beginning of May. Outside of the asphalt needed for the parking lot, an entrance to Madison Avenue must also be designed with the help of BP. There will also be a memorial erected for the three Wood River officers who have fallen in the line of duty, but designs for that memorial are still in the works, Maguire said. When approved by Wells, the memorial will be built on the north side of the station.