

RIVER FOREST

Proud Heritage • Bright Future

The Village of River Forest Newsletter | January, 2022



Capital Improvement Plan

All Village programs and services are provided with three guiding principles in mind: providing a safe community, strengthening property values and quality of life, and working to stabilize property taxes. The Village's annual budget is prepared by Village Staff and approved by the Village Board in service to those guiding principles and with the understanding that sound management of its finances, resources and infrastructure, is key to ensuring the long term health of the organization and community.

Each January, the Village Staff present to the Village Board of Trustees a draft Capital Improvement Plan, or CIP. The five-year Capital Improvement Plan is a planning tool for the Village that seeks to identify major capital projects and corresponding funding sources for projects that are \$10,000 or more. The CIP is the initial step toward preparing the annual budget and is integrated into the final document.

The Plan is generally amended during the budget process as determinations are made for items to be moved forward or to be deferred based on current information. Projects and purchases included in the CIP are vehicles, building improvements, equipment, IT, water and sewer infrastructure, streets, sidewalks, and alleys. The planning document is researched and updated by Village Staff every year.

Later this month, the draft plan will be completed and made available prior to it being formally presented to the Village Board of Trustees. More information about the draft and the meeting will be communicated to the community. To view past CIP's and all other financial documents, [click here](#).

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Village Board Trustees



From Village President Cathy Adduci

Dear River Forest residents,

Welcome to 2022 and a very happy New Year to you and yours. As we enter what are usually the snowiest months of the year, I hope you will take time to review the many important snow reminders in this edition.

This month, the Village Board of Trustees and I will be reviewing the draft Capital Improvement Plan. We review this important document each year and look to schedule capital expenditures for the next five years. Capital expenditures include improvements to our government buildings, purchase of police and fire vehicles, public works equipment, etc. This is the first step in our annual budget process.

The Village continues to prioritize transparent communication of information and Board action to our residents and businesses. So if you, or someone you know, do not already receive Village newsletters, register at vrf.us/Alerts. By signing up, you will receive Village Board meeting agendas and our newsletters, which contain information about actions the Board has taken on key decisions and other important information such as our annual budget, as well as anything else you wanted to know about how our local government runs.

One of our core guiding principles the Board and I have established is to stabilize our property taxes so that we all can afford to live comfortably in our home. Economic development is the cornerstone of that principle.

The development at the corner of Lake and Lathrop continues to make progress. Site excavation, which began in December, removed designated areas of soil to prepare the site for construction. This includes a two-foot deep section of soil throughout the entire site as well as deeper areas where the foundations will be poured. The soil is loaded into dump trucks which remove it from the site and deliver it to a facility managed in accordance with all Illinois Environmental Protection Agency requirements. For more updates on this project, visit vrf.us/LakeandLathrop. The Board and I have made a commitment to keeping this information accurate and up to date.

On the last page of this edition, please read about the upcoming events that Dominican University is hosting including the National Day of Racial Healing on January 18th. I encourage our residents to read more and attend.

Finally, I wish to offer my sincere condolences to the friends and family of long-time River Forest resident and community leader, Don Offermann.

Sincerely,

Cathy Adduci, Village President
Village of River Forest



**Erika
Bachner**



**Kathleen
Brennan**



**Lisa
Gillis**



**Ken
Johnson**



**Robert
O'Connell**



**Respicio F.
Vazquez**

Village Clerk



**Jonathan
Keller**

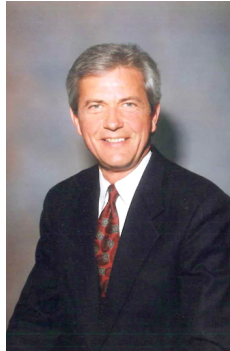
To contact the
Village Board
to submit a
comment or
question, click the
button below

Contact the
Village Board

News Around Town

In Memoriam: Don Offermann

Longtime River Forest resident and community leader Don Offermann died on December 26, 2021. He was 84 years old. Don served for 41 years as an educator and 22 as a banker. He was an English teacher, track coach and the Superintendent and Principal from 1990 to 1999 during his tenure at Oak Park River Forest High School. He was a parishioner of Grace Lutheran Church and also an avid member of a group of local runners who ran early mornings through the neighborhood of River Forest.



VBOT Approved HPC Ordinance Change

During their meeting on December 13, 2021, the Village Board of Trustees unanimously approved the ordinance change proposed by the Historic Preservation Commission to extend the maximum potential demolition delay for the PRI Public Recreational and Institutional zoned significant properties from six months to twelve months. This decision comes after owners of impacted properties and residents were notified of a public meeting held by the HPC that garnered no public comment. Chair Dave Franek presented the proposed change to the Village Board during the meeting. More information can be found at vrf.us/HPCOrdinanceChange.



Join the Winter Reading Challenge

Now through January 31, at the River Forest Library. Patrons of all ages can participate and win prizes.

Children ages 2-10 can pick up a bingo card at the Children's Desk and win a new book.

Tweens and Teens can participate using the Beanstack app. The first book logged will earn them a fun prize. Each additional book read earns a raffle entry for a Kindle Fire.

Adults can log their books on the Beanstack app or fill out a raffle ticket on the 2nd floor. Each book read earns a raffle for a Kindle Paperwhite, Karl's Craft Soup, or a Rare Bird Preserves gift basket.

Got New Gadgets as Gifts? Recycle Old Electronics

EWorks is an electronics recycling service that was established in 2009 to create employment opportunities for people with disabilities. eWorks achieves this mission by providing competitive recycling, refurbishment and resale services of all types of office and industrial technologies and consumer electronics. Residents can bring items directly to the eWorks facility in Elk Grove Village, located at 1201 Estes St. Please note that there is a fee for televisions and monitors, which can be paid online in advance. [Click here](#) for more information.



Village Installs Electric Vehicle Charging Station

The Village recently installed its first electric vehicle charging station on Central Avenue behind Village Hall. The level two dual-port charging station is capable of charging two vehicles at a time. The station utilizes the ChargePoint network and is currently free to use. As it becomes increasingly important that residents and visitors of the Village have charging options in public parking areas, the Village will be looking to install stations throughout the community in the coming years and exploring electric vehicle options for the Village's fleet. Thank you to the Sustainability Commission for obtaining a grant to subsidize this purchase and for the continued efforts to reduce the Village's greenhouse gas emissions.

Village Department News

Fire Department

Snow Safety Reminders

The River Forest Fire Department works hard to keep hydrants clear of snow, but can use the help of residents. Snow covered hydrants can be very difficult to find and access in an emergency.

When shoveling this year, make sure to take care to avoid injury or fatigue. Take it slow and like any exercise, stretch and warm up for 5-10 minutes before you begin. Try to shovel only fresh, powdery snow (because it's lighter) and push snow rather than lifting it. If you have to lift it, use a small shovel or only partially fill the shovel and bend at the knees keeping your feet apart to have a strong stance. Lift with your legs, not your back. Do not work to the point of exhaustion. Take frequent breaks and stay hydrated. Most of all - if you develop chest pains, dizziness or shortness of breath, Don't Wait... STOP shoveling and call 911.

Residents using snow blowers should be sure to read the owner's manual and review the safety precautions of the snow blower before starting. Keep your hands away from the moving parts. NEVER use your hand to unclog snow in a snow blower! Be aware of the carbon monoxide risk of running a snow blower in an enclosed space and refuel your snow blower when it is off, never when it is running. Pushing a snowblower can also cause fatigue and injury - be safe and never overwork yourself. For more information call the River Forest Fire Prevention Bureau at 708-714-3562.

Police Department

Winter Weather Driving Safety Information

Winter Weather Driving Information from our partners at the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

- **Slow down.** Even if you have all-wheel drive, slippery conditions will reduce your ability to stop, and the faster you are traveling the longer it will take you to stop.
- **Beware of black ice.** Black ice is dangerous because it can be hard to see, but you can anticipate it on bridges, in the shadows of tall buildings, and near intersections. In bad weather, give yourself even more time and distance to stop for intersections.
- **Avoid tailgating.** Leave as much room as you can between yourself and the car in front of you to stop in case that person brakes suddenly.
- **Don't brake during a turn.** Slow down ahead of time and take your foot off the brake in order to coast through the turn.
- **Turn into a skid.** Remain calm, take your foot off the brake and the gas pedals, and turn the car in the direction the car is skidding. For example, if sliding to the left, gently turn the steering wheel to the left. This cancels out the skid. The car corrects itself and goes straight.
- **Accident reporting.** If you are involved in an accident on a



public way, you may call 911 to report the accident. If there are no injuries and all cars involved are drivable, you may be instructed to drive to the nearest police station in the jurisdiction to complete the report. Remember that if weather conditions contributed to your accident, there is a chance that those same conditions may contribute to additional accidents nearby. If it is safe to do so, you may move your car out of a dangerous location. If you are unable to move your vehicle, remain inside with your seatbelt on.

- **Just don't drive.** The best way to be safe during inclement weather is to simply avoid driving if possible. Be aware of weather advisories and alerts and plan ahead in order to ensure you are not on the road.



Public Works

Village Snow Operations

With only nine members, the Village's Public Works crew divides tasks to adequately prepare for winter storms. In the days leading up to a snow event, anti-icing equipment is deployed, which sprays a solution to keep snow and ice from bonding to pavement. In the hours prior to snowfall, 2-3 crew members salt the roads to establish a wet base, reducing the formation of ice and making it easier to plow once snow arrives. Plowing operations begin after 2" of snow accumulation, and with a minimum of 6 members needed, plowing Village streets takes approximately 5-6 hours. Periodic salt applications keep snow from freezing to the pavement, and the 3 remaining employees clear Village-owned parking lots and alleys. The crew plans for routes to be completed prior to rush hour to ensure the safest driving conditions for motorists, as well as to keep plowing vehicles from idling in traffic.

Residents can help the crew plow efficiently by abiding by the Village's snow parking regulation: no parking on Village streets for 8 hours following a snowfall of 2" or more. When vehicles are parked opposite each other, trucks have to back down the block and return when vehicles have been moved because the plows are too wide and risk damaging the vehicles.

In order to minimize the amount of snow pushed back onto driveway aprons from plows, residents are asked to deposit shoveled snow onto the parkway to the right of the driveway (when facing the street). Snow deposited onto an already plowed street may freeze and create hazardous conditions, leading to unnecessary additional work and overtime for the crew.

Residents on corner lots are reminded it is their responsibility to also clear the sidewalk squares leading to a crosswalk. This is particularly important as it helps individuals with limited mobility to safely cross the street.

Committee/ Commission Spotlight

River Forest Sustainability



Holiday Lights Recycling

The Village of River Forest continues to partner with Elgin Recycling Inc. to provide an easy way to responsibly dispose of old and unusable holiday lights. Residents can drop off holiday lights for recycling in a receptacle clearly marked for this purpose behind Village Hall (400 Park Avenue) under the train overpass. This bin will be available through 01/15/2022.



ACCEPTED: Wire string holiday lights and extension cords.

NOT ACCEPTED: Live Trees, Artificial Trees, Live Greens, Wreaths, Garland, Ornaments, Figurines, Inflatables.

Elgin Recycling takes the lights and cords. The strands are separated, baled and sent to be chopped or shredded and sold as a commodity to foundries and mills across the United States.

Compost Your Holiday Greens

Holiday greens such as live Christmas trees, wreaths and garland will be collected every Tuesday during the month of January by the Village's waste hauler. The holiday greens must be placed on the parkway prior to 7AM on these days. Please remove all lights, tinsel, ornaments, metal hangers, plastic material and stands prior to placing at the curb for pick-up as these materials will prevent the item from being properly composted. All compost made from these items will be distributed as part of compost shared each April with LRS customers who pay for curbside composting. [Click here](#) to learn more about the VRF curbside composting program.



Age Friendly Ad Hoc Committee

The Age-Friendly Ad Hoc Committee is composed of eight members who are Village residents and appointed by the Village President with the advice and consent of the Board of Trustees.

The purpose of the Committee is to conduct an assessment of age-friendliness in the Village and prepare an Age-Friendly Community Plan. This past year, the Committee developed and conducted a random sample survey of older residents in the Village. The Committee will next work to analyze the survey results and begin assembling a plan to ensure River Forest is a welcoming community to age in place and with dignity. The Plan will contain recommendations on policies and practices, based on the needs identified by older residents in the survey, to be considered by the Village Board of Trustees. This Plan will ultimately be submitted to the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP).

Someone to Know

Trustee Respicio Vazquez (Res) has served as the Chairperson of the Age-Friendly Advisory Committee since its inception in 2020. As Chair, he is focused on meeting the specific needs of older adults in River Forest. Res moved here with his wife Annie, mother-in-law Rosa, and sister-in-law Peppy in 2014. He says that providing care for Rosa and Peppy has increased his awareness and appreciation for the needs of older adults and people with disabilities.

Res is an educational law attorney and serves as the General Counsel for Elgin Community College. He has worked directly for public educational entities, as well as the private firms that advise them throughout his 34-year career.

Res says his favorite aspect of the Village is the friendliness of the residents and their welcoming nature. He shares that his parents raised him with the value of not only taking care of family, but also looking out for and giving back to the community. He says meeting so many good people here makes it easy to volunteer his time. He has served as Trustee since 2017 and currently serves on the River Forest Collaboration Committee and the D90 Inclusive Advisory Board, as well. He thanks Annie for her support, which he says is reflective of how much she also loves this community.



**Respicio
Vazquez**

Organizations Serving River Forest



Township



Many Township services and programs are returning to meeting in-person. To learn more, visit RiverForestTownship.org, the River Forest community calendar at rfhappenings.com, or email Supervisor Carla Sloan at supervisor@riverforesttownship.org.

Call on the Senior Home Repair Program for your home project needs!

The Senior Home Repair Program is available to River Forest residents aged 60+. Fees range from \$20-\$40 per hour, depending on an individual's income. Projects eligible under the Senior Home Repair Program include grab bar installations and picture hanging. No emergency repairs qualify nor repairs that would require a building permit. The program is supported by the River Forest and Oak Park Townships and the Villages of River Forest and Oak Park. Contact Michelle at 847-969-0561 or michellehill@nwph.net with questions or to schedule an appointment.

Seniors: Sign up for the Community Connect Weekly Email

Every Friday, you can receive the free Community Connect email newsletter! Community Connect is a newsletter published each Friday which provides information on upcoming events in River Forest, Oak Park, and surrounding communities. To be added to the mailing list, email Betsy Kelly at communityconnectmail@gmail.com.

Youth Scholarships Available

River Forest Township offers scholarships to River Forest youth (ages 5-18) with demonstrated financial need so that they can participate in after-school/weekend recreational, sports, and arts-related programs. Eligible youth can receive scholarships of up to \$250 annually through an agency/organization. The Township asks the family and the agency/organization offering the scholarship to share the overall cost. Scholarships are also available to younger children on a case-by-case basis. For any questions, email Carla Sloan supervisor@riverforesttownship.org.



Park District



River Forest Park District

River Forest Park District Updates

Registration is currently underway for River Forest Park District winter programs. There are programs for all ages and various new activities, including Run Forest Run Club!, eSports Leagues, Parents' Night Out, teen trips on school days off, and more! [Click here](#) to view the Winter Fun Guide and register for Park District activities.

For the second year in a row, the River Forest Park District will be hosting a Virtual Beer Tasting Series in January and February, featuring Chicago area brewers. Learn from two brewers per event and receive a tasting pack. For details, [click here](#).



The Spring/Camp Fun Guide will be available online in mid-February. [Sign up](#) for the Park Bench e-newsletter to receive updates on special events, program registration, and District happenings.

rfparks.com | 708-366-6660

Library

See everything your Library has to offer by visiting our [website](#).

Join us for these upcoming programs:

Saturday, 1/8, 2-3 PM, Yoga Meditation With Sound Bath. Adult

Rhonda Fentry leads a form of meditation using ambient overlapping sounds and vibrations from Crystal and Tibetan singing bowls, tapping into your inner deep subconscious and awakening new energy. [Advanced registration required.](#)

Wednesday, 1/12, 7-8:30 PM, My College Planning Team: How to Reduce College Costs: Strategies You Need to Know. Everyone

This seminar will provide an array of information for parents, current high school sophomores, and juniors as they begin the college search process. The free, 90-minute seminar will cover selecting college majors, scholarship searches, and ACT preparation. Advanced registration is required to attend. To register, [click here](#).

Organizations Serving River Forest



Oak Park and River Forest High School



Roosevelt Middle School



Willard Elementary School



Lincoln Elementary School

District 200

New article series highlights equitable excellence at OPRF High School

OPRFHS is widely considered an outstanding high school, known for high-level student achievement, excellent instruction, innovative academic programs, and exceptional performing arts, athletics, clubs, and activities. But to be truly an exemplary school, we must become excellent for ALL students, not just some.

Achieving the goal of equitable excellence requires that we remove barriers to opportunity and success, particularly for our students of color. Making sure that we are equitable in the way we use our resources--that is, directing them where they are most needed--is an essential part of this process.

In the District's new series of articles, **Equitable Excellence in Action**, we aim to show the ways in which we are working toward this goal. Article topics range from accessibility and safe spaces, to social-emotional skills and college and career pathways. Read them all by visiting bit.ly/EquitableExcellenceOPRFHS.



Photo above is from a recent article about the District 200 post-high school college and career-pathway options, students Zaniya Lay-Pigram and Destiny Davis practice bedside care on a nursing mannequin during a Fundamentals of Nursing class.

oprfs.org | 708-383-0700

District 90

January Non-Attendance Days in District 90

District 90 students will not be scheduled to attend school on two separate occasions. On Friday, January 14, 2022, students will not be in attendance for an Institute Day when teachers take part in professional development. The entire District 90 will also be closed on Monday, January 17, 2022, for the Dr. Martin Luther King holiday.



Interested in District 90 Kindergarten?
attend the

2022-23 Virtual Kindergarten
Information Night
Thursday, February 3, 2022
6:30 pm Live Virtual Presentation

Kindergarten Registration Kicks Off on Information Night

District 90 is inviting parents of incoming Kindergarteners to a Virtual Kindergarten Information Night on Thursday, February 3, 2022, at 6:30 PM via the Zoom platform. Families who reside north of Chicago Avenue should plan to attend the Willard program, while families who live south of Chicago Avenue should attend the Lincoln event. To obtain the Zoom link and password, please send an email to the appropriate school:

Lincoln School – duboist@district90.org
Willard School – olivaress@district90.org

The Information Night provides an opportunity to learn more about the District's Kindergarten program. There will be presentations from teachers, the principal, and others involved with Kindergarten students. Part of the program will also be dedicated to audience questions. Registration for District 90 Kindergarten starts on Friday, February 5, for children who turn five years of age on or before September 1, 2022.

district90.org | 708-771-8282



Business Corner

Are you considering a new look to start the New Year or to simply relax after the holiday festivities? Check out the variety of services offered by **Elan Hair, Body and Sole**, from haircuts and color to spa experiences! Elan's approach to beauty and grooming is precision in execution, organic in feel, and modern in look. Whether you want a radical new look, a subtle change, or want to indulge in an array of spa services, Elan's team members will provide you with individual attention and impeccable service. Click [here](#) for a list of services or to make an appointment today!

Dominican University Special Programs

National Day of Racial Healing - January 18



To commemorate the sixth annual National Day of Racial Healing, Dominican University will be sponsoring a virtual keynote address titled *Ongoing for Mayberry: How Cultural Ideals Serve as Weapons of Exclusion*. The keynote address will be co-presented by Reggie L. Williams, Ph.D., and the Dominican University Truth, Racial Healing and Transformation Campus Center. Dr. Williams is a Professor of Christian ethics at McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago, Illinois. His work centers on the Intersection of black theology, blackness studies, aesthetics, and Dietrich Bonhoeffer studies. The Truth, Racial Healing and Transformation Campus Center is a nationally recognized, community-based racial justice initiative. For more information on the keynote address, click [here](#). To register, click [here](#).

White Accountability Groups

Dominican University will be facilitating a series of White Accountability Groups (w.a.g.). The small groups are an opportunity for individuals who identify as white to participate in dialogue on recognizing their whiteness and white privilege. Small groups will meet for eight sessions, over Zoom, every other week on Mondays from 4-5:15 PM, beginning on January 31.

Those expressing interest in participating can register by clicking [here](#). If you have any questions, email Amy Omi aomi@dom.edu or Lisa Petrov lapetrov@dom.edu.



Follow the Village on Social Media



Sign Up For Email and Alerts



River Forest Events



Village Contact Information

Village Administration
708-714-3520

Village Administrator
Brian Murphy

Finance Department
708-714-3524

Director Rosemary McAdams

Fire Department
708-714-3560

Public Works and Development Services

708-714-3551

Director Jeff Loster

Police Department
708-714-3540

Chief James O'Shea

Emergency Services
Dial 911

400 Park Avenue River Forest, IL 60305

708-366-8500

708-366-3702 (fax)

Monday 8 a.m. – 7 p.m.

Tuesday- Friday 8a.m. – 4:30 p.m.