



## VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION

Tuesday, February 11, 2025 – 7:00 PM  
Village Hall – 400 Park Ave., River Forest, IL

You may submit your written public comments via email in advance of the meeting to: [sjansen@vrf.us](mailto:sjansen@vrf.us)  
You may listen to the meeting by participating in a Zoom conference call as follows: dial-in number: 312-626-6799 with meeting ID: 816 4491 8569 or by clicking [here](#). If you would like to speak during public comment, please email [sjansen@vrf.us](mailto:sjansen@vrf.us) by 4:00 PM on Tuesday, February 11, 2025.

### AGENDA

1. Call to Order/Roll Call
2. Public Comment
3. Adoption of Meeting Minutes for January 14, 2025
4. Commissioner Updates
5. Tree Preservation Ordinance
6. Continued Sustainable Community Member Recognition Discussion
7. Waste and Compost
  - a. Curbside Compost Program Discussion
  - b. Quarterly LRS Waste Report
  - c. E-Waste Collection – Sign-up Deadline March 12. Pick-up March 17-19
8. Schedule Next Meeting – March 11, 2025
9. Adjournment

**VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST  
SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION  
TUESDAY, JANUARY 14, 2025**

A regular meeting of the Village of River Forest Sustainability Commission was held on Tuesday, January 14, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. in the Community Room of Village Hall, 400 Park Avenue – River Forest, IL.

**1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM. Upon roll call, the following persons were:

Present: Co-Chairs Charrette and Lennon, Commissioners Mezzatesta, Kadlec, Avalos, Veazie (arriving at 7:03) and Student Commissioner Stierwalt.  
Absent: Commissioner Hayley  
Also Present: Management Analyst Seth Jansen

Co-Char Charrette made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Mezzatesta, to allow Commissioner Hayley to participate remotely pursuant to Section 7 of the Open Meetings Act (5 ILCS 120/7).

Roll Call:

Ayes: Co-Chairs Charrette and Lennon, Commissioners Mezzatesta, Kadlec, Avalos, and Veazie  
Absent: Commissioner Hayley  
Nays: None  
Motion Passes.

Commissioner Hayley added to the roll.

**2. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Patrick Hosty of Clinton Pl spoke in support of the proposed leaf blower ordinance and expressed concern of the noise generated by gas-powered blowers

Ray McDonald of Jackson Ave spoke in support of the proposed leaf blower ordinance. He stated he practiced as a physician for 52 years and discussed the health and hearing impacts of exposure to even short amounts of exposure to high decibel sound. He provided some informational material to the Commission and noted that other communities and states have already enacted such bans.

**3. ADOPTION OF MEETING MINUTES**

Commissioner Mezzatesta made a motion, seconded by Co-Chair Charrette to approve the meeting minutes from December 10, 2024.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Co-Chairs Charrette and Lennon, Commissioners Veazie, Hayley, Mezzatesta, Kadlec, and Avalos

Absent: None

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

#### **4. COMMISSIONER UPDATES**

Commissioner Mezzatesta stated she had outlined a list of National and International Days that relate to sustainability and that some of these days can be incorporated into the weekly and monthly newsletters articles from the Commission. Commissioner Mezzatesta briefly highlighted some items on the list as ideas for future newsletter articles.

Commissioner Avalos attended a food waste webinar and suggested finding ways to highlight how food waste is generated and ways to eliminate food waste even before diversion from garbage to compost. Commissioner Avalos also commended the River Forest Police Department for their purchase of the Village's first Electric Vehicle.

#### **5. PROPOSED LEAF BLOWER ORDINANCE**

Mr. Jansen briefly outlined the updated draft leaf blower ordinance following feedback from the Board and staff. Mr. Jansen also stated the Board had requested that other communities be analyzed, specifically those who formed a regional working group on the topic in the north suburbs. Mr. Jansen outlined that report and explained the input provided by staff.

Co-Chair Lennon requested further clarification to specifically state that the ban on generators being used to power electric leaf blowers is fuel-powered or gas-powered combustion engine generators. Co-Chair Lennon did raise concern about the existing definition of what qualifies as a contractor. Co-Chair Lennon wanted to ensure that the ban applies to all and there is not a loophole relating to who qualifies as a contractor. Mr. Jansen explained that only the rebate portion of the draft would apply to contractors, and the ban would apply to all users of gas-powered leaf blowers.

Co-Chair Charrette had asked about the dates that seasonal bans take effect was consistent with the other communities. Co-Chair Charrette requested the draft ordinance be amended by changing the end date of the initial seasonal ban from September 1 to September 15. The Commission agreed to these changes.

Commissioner Veazie requested clarification on what has been changed since the most recent previous draft the Commission reviewed. Mr. Jansen summarized the changes. Co-Chair Lennon asked about the process for adoption after their recommendation, and Mr. Jansen explained the subsequent steps. Co-Chair Charrette requested that a provision be added to one of the whereas provisions in the ordinance stating that the timeframe is subject to change based on technological advancements.

Commissioner Mezzatesta made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Veazie to recommend the Village Board ad an ordinance regulating the use of gas-powered leaf blowers within the Village and to incentivize the use of electric leaf blowers by landscape contractors operating within the Village.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Co-Chairs Charrette and Lennon, Commissioners Veazie, Hayley, Mezzatesta, Kadlec, and Avalos

Absent: None

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

The Commission discussed how to notify contractors upon official passage and suggested highlighting the first company to voluntarily make the transition within the Village newsletter.

## **6. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY MEMBER RECOGNITION DISCUSSION**

Mr. Jansen briefly outlined the memo he provided to staff. Commissioner Hayley outlined the list of draft recognition topics she had created that was included in the memo. Commissioner Hayley solicited Commission input for how to simplify the list by reducing the number and making the list more tangible for households to achieve. The Commission discussed how to best track and measure the achievement of the draft goals outlined in the list. Commissioner Veazie inquired about Oak Park’s program for community recognition. Commissioner Avalos indicated he would reach out to the Chair of Oak Park’s Environment and Energy Commission to understand what their program and process is. The Commission discussed that the list be a pledge for residents to take and work towards specific benchmarks for each item. The Commission discussed establishing set criteria and have it be self-driven or an honor system for residents to undertake the actions. The Commission further discussed finding opportunities to highlight residents and businesses for their sustainable actions. The Commission discussed some sort of visual recognition, like a yard sign or window sticker, to recognize the residents. Commissioner Hayley stated she would look into what other communities are doing. The Commission recommended developing some small basic steps first and then have the Commission add more complex or advanced items over time. Commissioner Kadlec suggested developing a form for residents to self-report. The Commission discussed ways to promote participation, make things as easy, voluntary, and self-paced as possible. The Commission suggested use of the online surveys to solicit input for residents who wished to share or promote their sustainable actions. The Commission discussed potential formats to make it easier for residents to respond to.

The Commission discussed the compost rates by block and the plan to recognize the 900 Block of Bonnie Brae in a weekly newsletter as the lead composting block with 11 households, or 65% of the block, being subscribed to the Curbside Composting Program.

## **7. UIC CLIMATE PLAN - RESILIENCE RECOMMENDATIONS DISCUSSION**

Mr. Jansen outlined the memo he had drafted on the UIC Climate Plan resilience-related recommendations. Commissioner Mezzatesta suggested the waste diversion recommendations be tied in with the existing newsletter and communications process. Mr. Jansen jumped ahead to the Communications part of the agenda and noted the LRS trip the Commission had taken as the monthly newsletter and that the weekly articles for the month would also focus on recycling-related topics: effective curbside recycling, plastic bag and film recycling drop off locations, textile recycling, and promotion of the Cook County Center for Hard to Recycle Materials Center. The Commission discussed further communications to promote sustainable actions. Commissioner Avalos suggested also sharing the One Earth Collective's sustainability calendar for additional events. Commissioner Lennon suggested merging the resilience related items within the UIC Climate Plans into the list of sustainable actions and goals for residents. Commissioner Veazie suggested finding people within the community who are knowledgeable on the various sustainability topics within the Climate Plans and engaging with them to share information through the Commissions communications channels.

## **8. OTHER BUSINESS**

Mr. Jansen briefly summarized the upcoming communications plan for the Commission newsletter articles, and the Commission made further topic suggestions. Mr. Jansen summarized the Quarterly EV Charging Report provided to the Commission. Mr. Jansen provided an update on the ongoing EV Charging Station Installation Project and indicated that a discussion on fee structures for the new charging stations would come to the Commission in the coming months.

Commissioner Kadlec stated he was interested in discussing light pollution. The Commission discussed a previous meeting in which a resident presented on the issues surrounding light pollution and previous communications put out on the topic. The Commission suggested reusing those communications in the near future.

Commissioner Avalos raised interest in filling the vacant student commissioner position. The Commission discussed potential ways to fill the vacancy.

## **9. SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING – FEBRUARY 11, 2025**

The Commission reached a consensus to hold its next meeting Tuesday, February 11, 2025.

## **10. ADJOURNMENT**

Co-Chair Charrette made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Avalos, to adjourn the meeting at 8:26 PM.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Co-Chairs Charrette and Lennon, Commissioners Veazie, Hayley, Mezzatesta, Kadlec, and Avalos

Absent: None

Nays:           None  
Motion Passes.

---

Seth Jansen, Secretary



**Village of River Forest**  
**Public Works and Engineering**  
400 Park Avenue  
River Forest, IL 60305  
Tel: 708-366-8500

---

**MEMORANDUM**

---

Date: February 11, 2025

To: Sustainability Commission

From: Seth Jansen, Management Analyst

Subj: Draft Tree Preservation Ordinance

---

As discussed at the October 2024 meeting of the Sustainability Commission, the UIC Climate Action Plans recommended expansion of the Village's existing tree preservation ordinance, specifically to further protect old growth trees on private properties, establishment tree cutting fees, and requiring tree planting requirements to replace trees that are cut down.

The existing tree preservation ordinance only applies to multi-family residential, commercial, institutional and governmental property where the building footprint covers five thousand square feet or more of land area and the existing regulations limit the prohibition to properties requiring building permit approval as set forth in this code, or which is the subject of a petition for a zoning variation or subdivision. Trees are approved for removal if they meet at least one of the following conditions: safety hazard, diseased or weakened tree, necessity of good forestry practices such as the number of healthy trees a parcel will support, necessity of removal for location of a proposed structure without causing unreasonable hardship, or necessity of removal in order to provide an essential grade change. Trees identified for removal must be replaced with a tree or trees with a total diameter adding up to that of the original tree. Trees designated for preservation that are removed or damaged shall be replaced with a greater number of trees as outlined in the existing code. In this draft language, trees meeting the conditions for approval for single family homes will not be subject to the replacement requirements.

Currently, no permit is required for the removal of trees on single-family residential property; however, the removal must be completed by a forester licensed with the Village. When discussed in October, the input from the Commission was to start by identifying a few specific species of trees and seeking to protect fully mature trees of these species. Input from Village staff who are Certified Arborists resulted in the recommendations that Oaks and Elms over 20 inches in Diameter at Breast Height be preserved. This includes all species of Oak and all species of Elm except for invasive Siberian Elms. The 20-inch diameter was established because 20 inches is considered the beginning of maturity for Elms, with 30 inches being very mature or

historic. Oak trees have varying growth rates based on species, with most reaching maturity between 15 inches and 25 inches in diameter.

Further changes to the zoning code were technical in nature to reflect the common practice of utilizing Diameter at Breast Height, which is defined as four and a half feet above the ground, rather than the previous standard of one foot above the ground.

**Recommendation:** Motion to make a recommendation to the Village Board of Trustees to proceed with a text amendment related to tree preservation.

**Attachments:** Draft Tree Preservation Ordinance



### 10-24-3: APPLICABILITY:

The requirements of this chapter shall apply to multi-family residential buildings, commercial establishments, institutions and government buildings, where the building footprint covers five thousand square feet or more of land area. Only those provisions of this chapter related to subsection 10-24-4B, "Parkway Landscaping", and Section 10-24-5, "Tree Preservation", of this chapter shall apply to single- family residential properties.

Planned development applications which have been approved before April 18, 2002, are hereby exempt from the requirements of this chapter. (Ord. 3009, 1-27-2003)

### 10-24-5: TREE PRESERVATION:

It is the purpose and intent of this section to establish regulations limiting the removal and ensuring the replacement of trees from single family, multi-family residential, commercial, institutional and governmental property within the village and, in doing so, safeguard the ecological and aesthetic environment of the community. These regulations are further intended to serve to dissuade the unnecessary clearing and disturbing of land so as to preserve, insofar as practical, the existing natural trees, and preserve existing landscaping buffers to minimize the impact of adjoining differing land uses, enhance and protect the integrity of roadway corridors, and reduce the surface heat and negative visual impact of vehicular use areas.

#### A. Tree Removal:

1. Approval Required: No tree having a trunk size of six inches or greater in Diameter at Breast Height, ~~diameter~~ as measured four feet six inches ~~twelve inches~~ above the established ground levels, shall be removed from any multi-family residential, commercial, institutional and governmental property requiring building permit approval as set forth in this code, or which is the subject of a petition for a zoning variation or subdivision in the village, without written approval from the zoning administrator or his authorized designee. For single family residential properties, no Oak tree or Elm tree, except for a Siberian Elm, having a trunk size of 20 inches or greater in Diameter at Breast height above the established ground levels, shall be removed without written approval from the zoning administrator or his authorized designee; such trees meeting the conditions for approval established in 10-24-5 (A)(2) shall not be subject to the replacement requirements of 10-24-5 (A)(3). In cases where only a zoning variation is sought, only those trees that are to be removed as a result of the construction that requires the variation shall be subject to these regulations. Undesirable species of trees such as those described in section 10-24-10 of this chapter shall be exempt from these regulations. A written statement indicating the reasons for removal of trees and a general description of the trees to be removed shall accompany the application for tree removal.

2. Conditions Of Approval: The zoning administrator or his authorized designee shall approve all requests for tree removal if one or more of the following conditions is present:

a. Safety Hazard To Pedestrians Or Vehicular Traffic: Necessity to remove trees that pose a safety hazard to pedestrian or vehicular traffic or threaten to cause a disruption of public safety.

b. Safety Hazard To Buildings: Necessity to remove trees which pose a safety hazard to a building.

c. Diseased Or Weakened Trees: Necessity to remove diseased trees or trees weakened by age, storm, fire or other injury.

d. Observe Good Forestry Practice: Necessity to observe good forestry practice, i.e., the number of healthy trees a given parcel of land will support.

e. Location Of Proposed Structure: Necessity to remove trees in order to locate proposed structure(s) without causing unreasonable economic hardship.

f. Grade Changes: Necessity to remove trees in order to provide for essential grade changes.

3. Replacement Trees: Any trees that have been identified for removal must be replaced in accordance with the following criteria:

a. Replacement trees shall either:

(1) Equal or exceed the same size caliper as the tree removed; or

(2) Consist of smaller trees, not less than three inches in caliper, which add up to the caliper of the original tree.

b. All replacement trees shall be selected from the village's recommended species list (see section 10-24-10 of this chapter).

c. Replacement trees shall be documented on the final landscape plan.

d. Replacement trees may be used for required perimeter yard landscaping and screening on the subject property.

B. Protection Of Existing Trees During Construction:

1. Tree Survey: A tree survey shall be submitted at the time of an application for building permit approval indicating the location, size and species (both scientific and common) of all trees located on the parcel with a trunk size of six inches or greater, as measured four feet six ~~twelve~~ inches above the established ground level.

2. Integration Of Existing Trees Into Site And Landscape Plans: Subject to the determination of the zoning administrator, every reasonable effort shall be made to retain existing trees on the aforementioned trees survey through the integration of those trees surveyed into the site and landscape plan for the proposed development. Removal of trees

designed for preservation shall only be allowed by amendment to the approved landscape plan.

3. Tree Preservation Plan: A tree preservation plan shall be submitted at the time of an application for site plan and architectural approval indicating, at a minimum, the location of those trees to be preserved and the methods which are to be used to preserve such trees. The tree preservation plan shall specify the following preservation techniques:

a. Grading, Construction Equipment And Materials: All grading and construction equipment and materials shall be forbidden from encroaching upon the tree's drip line.

b. Materials Detrimental To Trees: Crushed limestone or any other materials that may be detrimental to trees shall not be dumped within the drip line of any trees nor shall be located at any higher location where drainage toward the tree(s) could conceivably affect the health of said tree(s).

c. Storage Of Vehicles: No materials or vehicles shall be stored, driven or parked within the drip line of any trees.

d. Installation Of Snow Fencing: Snow fencing, or an alternative temporary barrier, with the written approval of the zoning administrator or his authorized designee, shall be installed at the periphery of the tree's drip line to protect trees from root compaction by the storage of materials or vehicles.

e. Pruning: Identification of any trees which have to be saved, but which could be negatively affected during the construction process. All such trees shall be pruned by a qualified arborist to compensate for root loss during construction.

f. Preservation Methodology: The methods that are to be used to preserve those trees shall be clearly specified. If, in the opinion of the zoning administrator, or his authorized designee the necessary precautions, as specified in the tree preservation plan for the development, were not undertaken before or during construction to ensure the preservation of those trees, the site development permit for the parcel shall not be issued, or if previously issued, may be revoked until such time as compliance with the precautions is achieved.

g. Consultant: The village shall, at its discretion, have the right to retain a professional tree consultant/forester to review the preservation plans and to submit a written report to the zoning administrator. All expenses incurred by the village shall be reimbursed by the developer.

h. Village Right To Inspection: The village shall have the right to inspect the subject property at any time during the construction process, in order to verify that the developer and contractor have protected trees in accordance with the approved tree preservation plan.

4. Removal Of Trees Designated For Preservation: If it is determined by the village that a tree designated for preservation is destroyed or razed during the construction process by a deliberate action in violation of the approved tree preservation plan, such tree shall be

replaced with new trees in accordance with the following exchange rate. Village staff may, with just cause, waive the following exchange rate due to accidental damage to protected trees:

a. Exchange Rate:

Existing Trees (In Caliper Inches)	Number Of Replacement Trees
36+	1" for each 1" of tree removal
30-35	11
26-29	10
20-25	9
13-19	8
6-12	7

C. Trunk Size: Trunk size means Diameter at Breast Height, the diameter as measured at four feet six inches ~~twelve inches~~ above the established ground. For the above, in the event of a fraction of an inch, if the fraction is less than one-half inch, it may be disregarded. If the fraction is one-half or greater, it shall be counted as one inch.

D. Minimum Size Of Replacement Trees: All replacement trees shall be a minimum trunk size of three inches in diameter, as measured four feet six inches above the established ground.

E. Payment In Lieu Of Replacement Trees: If it is determined by the village that an insufficient area exists which would support any or all of the replacement trees, the property owner shall contribute one hundred percent of the dollar value (as determined by the most recent valuations of the international society of arboriculture) of the replacement trees to the village. Said funds shall be used for the sole purpose of planting trees at locations determined by the village. (Ord. 2960, 4-8-2002)



**Village of River Forest**  
**Public Works and Engineering**  
400 Park Avenue  
River Forest, IL 60305  
Tel: 708-366-8500

---

**MEMORANDUM**

---

Date: February 11, 2025

To: Sustainability Commission

From: Seth Jansen, Management Analyst

Subj: Community Sustainable Action Recognition

---

This memorandum provides outlines for two items following last month's discussion concerning Sustainability recognitions and awards. The first provides an overview of how neighboring communities operate Sustainable awards programs and examples of recent winners recognized by those communities.

Oak Park's Environment and Energy Commission gives out annual Green Awards. The Green Awards are open to "community members and organizations, local businesses and nonprofits, institutions, and collaborative projects and initiatives" but there are no specific categories. The nomination form is open ended, asking "Why should this nominee be considered to receive a Green Award?". For 2024, Oak Park's Commission awarded 2 awards: one to a local non-profit for their continued work on green issues, the other to a local family for the work done on their home, which included geothermal heating and cooling, energy efficient appliances and fixtures as part of a remodel, and in stallion of two rain gardens and a food garden. The nomination form and awards presentation are attached

Forest Park's Environmental Control Commission recently held their first annual Environmental Awards. They use a similar open-ended nomination form and have established four categories: Community Organization, Individual Resident, Local Business, and Collaborative Initiative. This year, awards were given in two of the categories. An individual resident was awarded for his back yard which includes two back yard compost systems for two separate gardens as well as a fishpond which doubles as an irrigation system for the gardens. A condo association was also recognized for their independently contracted compost program, EV charging program for residents, community solar program for the association's common areas, and planned heat pump installation.

Secondly, during discuss at last month's meeting regarding a resident score card are action card, it was suggested to match up potential actions residents could take with recommendations from the UIC Climate Plans. Listed below are recommendations from the plans, slightly

modified to reflect resident action and current programs. Guides and resources may need to be developed by the Commission to help promote such efforts.

- Plant a native or eco-friendly garden
- Plant a tree to help grow the Village tree canopy
- Utilize alternative modes of transportation such as bicycling or public transit.
- Install solar panels on your home
- Sign up for community solar
- Improve home energy efficiency through weatherization
- For Businesses and Institutions, publicly display Energy Performance Labels
- For Businesses and Institutions, voluntary energy benchmarking
- Improve waste diversion by participating in the following:
  - o Curbside composting
  - o Semiannual E-Waste and Hazardous Waste Collection
  - o Utilization of drop-off events such as yard signs and holiday lights collections
  - o Utilization of drop-off locations for items such as plastic bags and textiles
  - o Encourage reuse through garage sales, thrift shops, and donation drives
- Help prevent stormwater from entering the combined sewer system through installation of:
  - o Rain barrels, cisterns, or dry wells
  - o Rain gardens or bioswales
  - o Permeable pavers or removal of impermeable surfaces
- Purchase of an EV or hybrid vehicle
- Installation of heat pumps and other energy efficient appliances
- Improve Energy Efficiency through installation of any of the following:
  - o A smart thermostat
  - o LED lights
  - o Cool Roof roofing materials
  - o Heat pump
  - o Geothermal heating and cooling
- Enrollment into ComEd hourly pricing

**Attachments:** Oak Park Green Awards nomination form, Oak Park Green Awards presentation, Forest Park Environmental Awards nomination form, news article on Forest Park Environmental Awards.

# Environmental Awards Nomination Form

Environmental Awards recognize community members and organizations, local businesses and nonprofits, institutions, and collaborative projects that demonstrate leadership in advancing climate action and sustainability initiatives.

There are dedicated awards in the categories of Community Organization, Individual resident, Local Business, and Collaborative Initiative.

Nominations may be submitted by anyone on behalf of any person, organization, group, or business. The nomination deadline is **September 30**. Please email nomination form to [contact@forestpark.net](mailto:contact@forestpark.net) or drop off at Village Hall.

Winners will be announced and recognized during a Village Council meeting.

---

Name of person, group or business \_\_\_\_\_

Project Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Project Affiliations or Sponsorships \_\_\_\_\_

Project Web Site \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Person Making Nomination \_\_\_\_\_

We may need to contact you for more information.

Telephone of Person Making Nomination \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail of Person Making Nomination \_\_\_\_\_

Why should this nominee be considered to receive a Green Award? \*

\* For example, describe how the subject is unique and/or could be replicated elsewhere in the community, if the benefits of the project are lasting and/or measurable or how the subject contributes to community sustainability.



## NEWS

# ECC gives inaugural awards for sustainable excellence

*The Environmental Control Commission recognized Kevin Orze and the Grove Midrise Condominium Association for unique projects benefiting the environment*



by **Jessica Mordacq**

January 17, 2025





Forest Park Environmental Control Commission Chair Scott Whitebone presents Kevin Orze with an award for his personal efforts in support of the environment on Monday January 13, 2024 | Todd Bannor

Ever wonder what you can do to become a more environmentally sustainable member of Forest Park? If you're looking for ideas, perhaps you'll get some inspiration from the recipients of the [Environmental Control Commission's inaugural awards](#).

At the first Forest Park village council meeting of the year, the ECC handed out awards to acknowledge efforts in environmental and sustainable excellence in Forest Park. [ECC Chair Scott Whitebone](#) presented awards to Forest Park resident Kevin Orze and the Grove Midrise Condominium Association.

"I got so many emails about this individual," Whitebone said of Orze at the meeting. "Kevin has made remarkable contributions to sustainability in our community, transforming his backyard into a thriving ecosystem."

Whitebone said Orze has two composting systems: one where he uses lawn clippings and food scraps in his vegetable garden, and the other where he puts dog waste on non-edible plants. Orze's backyard also boasts a fish pond that supports local wildlife and serves as a water source to irrigate his garden.

Whitebone said that Orze also picks up litter throughout his neighborhood and even sold his personal vehicle so that he could take public transportation and bike more.

"Thank you, Kevin, for being a great example to your neighbors and our community," Whitebone said before handing him a plaque that the Forest Park Arts Alliance made for the occasion.

The Grove Midrise Condominium Association, a group representing two buildings and about 140 units in west Forest Park, won its ECC award for composting efforts. In 2022, the association launched a program where they contract with WasteNot Compost, which picks up food waste and kitchen scraps from the Grove weekly.

"Participation is voluntary, but so far 25% of all the residents use it," Whitebone said. "They've diverted an enormous amount of waste [from] landfills. They have reduced odor, pests, and the Grove receives a quantity of finished compost back to work on their gardens."

David Gulyas – chair of the GMCA Energy Solutions Commission, resident of the Grove for about six years, [and a member of the ECC](#) – accepted the award on behalf of the association.



Forest Park Environmental Control Commission Chair Scott Whitebone presents David Gulyas of The Grove Midrise Community Association for the group's waste composting program on Monday January 13, 2024 | Todd Bannor

Gulyas told the Review that, with the help of building manager Tim Davis, the Grove is also in the process of switching the buildings' air conditioning units to heat pumps, which provide both heating and cooling while using less energy. Gulyas said that, starting last year, about 20 residents have swapped out their AC units with Energy Matters, a contractor out of Oak Park.

And in 2021, the GMCA started an electric car charging program, where each midrise unit can have its own charging equipment, Gulyas said. The association got a group deal with a contractor, and those interested can buy charging equipment at a lower cost.

Finally, the GMCA has a community solar contract with Solstice, a company that helps offset electricity in the buildings' common areas.

Gulyas said the ECC awards are “an opportunity to really show what can be done and that people are actually doing things, instead of trying to wonder what they can do.”

With such successes at the Grove and in backyards like Orze’s, Whitebone said the ECC is pleased to continue the awards again next year.

“Recognizing those in our community who are practicing sustainability is so important,” Whitebone said. “We are excited about the interest and strong candidates we received and look forward to presenting awards every year.”



Home (<https://www.oak-park.us/Home>) / Community (<https://www.oak-park.us/Community>) / Sustainability & Resilience (<https://www.oak-park.us/Community/Sustainability-Resilience>) / Green Awards

## Green Awards

Green Awards recognize community members and organizations, local businesses and nonprofits, institutions, and collaborative projects and initiatives that demonstrate leadership in advancing equity-centered climate action, climate resilience, and sustainability in alignment with Oak Park's community climate and sustainability plan, [Climate Ready Oak Park](https://villageofoakparkil.prelive.opencities.com/Community/Sustainability-Resilience/Climate-Ready-Oak-Park) (<https://villageofoakparkil.prelive.opencities.com/Community/Sustainability-Resilience/Climate-Ready-Oak-Park>).

Nominations may be submitted by anyone on behalf of any person, organization, group, or business. The nomination deadline is Oct. 31. For more information call 708.358.5770 or email [sustainability@oak-park.us](mailto:sustainability@oak-park.us).

Winners are typically announced and recognized along with other community award recipients during a special Village celebration.

# Green Award nomination

Name of person, group or business Required

Project street address Required

Contact name Required

Contact phone number Required

Project affiliations or sponsorships

Project website

Name of person making nomination Required

Email of person making nomination Required

Why should this nominee be considered to receive a Green Award? Required

Please complete the following:

I'm not a robot reCAPTCHA  
Privacy - Terms

Environment and Energy Commission

Village of Oak Park



# Green Awards 2024



# Green Awards – 2024 Winners

1. Arbor West Neighbors Green Team
2. Marc and Dorie Blesoff



## ▶ Arbor West Neighbors Green Team

Arbor West Neighbors (AWN) is a grassroots organization of neighbors in Oak Park, River Forest, and Forest Park connected to support and enrich aging through community building and advocacy. AWN is an all-volunteer 501(c)3 organization, with more than 120 members.

The mission of AWN is to empower adults to thrive by building a multi-ethnic, multicultural community where all older adults are valued, age with dignity, and enjoy opportunities for growth and engagement.



➤ **AWN – Thriving Green**

*This award is based on the effort and hard work AWN put into a splendid event entitled **GREEN LIVING: Learning from your Neighbors**, held at the library in September of 2024. They are constantly looking for new ways to work on green issues in the community as they help empower their adult base.*



## ▶ The Blesoff Family – Living Green

Marc and Dorie Blesoff, along with their daughter Jamine and granddaughter, live at 225 N. Taylor in the Ridgeland-Oak Park Historic District. This neighborhood is a celebrated example of the Prairie School of Architecture, a style developed in the early 20th century that emphasizes harmony with the natural landscape.

The Blesoff family, spanning three generations, has demonstrated a deep and lasting commitment to sustainability. They have installed geothermal heating and cooling systems, created two rain gardens, cultivated a thriving food garden, and completed kitchen, bathroom, and basement remodeling projects that feature energy-efficient appliances, fixtures, and sustainable, eco-friendly materials.



- The Blesoff Family – 225 N. Taylor Ave.

## RAIN GARDENS



*BEFORE*



*AFTER*



## The Blesoff Family – 225 N. Taylor Ave.

Through these thoughtful and proactive efforts, the Blesoff family exemplifies many of the goals set forth in the CROP plan. Their multi-generational household models a lifestyle that not only addresses climate change but also preserves the natural landscape for future generations. By embracing sustainable practices, the Blesoffs serve as an inspiring example for their neighborhood and the broader community, showing how intentional choices can create a positive and lasting impact.

### FOOD GARDEN



*BEFORE*



*AFTER*



**Village of River Forest**  
**Public Works and Engineering**  
400 Park Avenue  
River Forest, IL 60305  
Tel: 708-366-8500

## MEMORANDUM

Date: February 11, 2025  
To: Sustainability Commission  
From: Seth Jansen, Management Analyst  
Subj: Curbside Composting Program

This memorandum is to outline the status of the Village's Curbside Composting Program. Currently, the Village offers opt-in curbside composting whereby residents may voluntarily join the composting program and be provided a cart by LRS for yard waste, food scraps, and other organic, compostable material. As of December 30, 2024, there are 532 households enrolled in the program, down from a high of 543 households in July of 2024.

In 2024, at the request of the Village Board of Trustees, the Sustainability Commission considered and provided input on the provision of the Village's waste hauling contract with LRS which allows for the Village to implement a transition from the current opt-in compost program to an opt-out compost program. The Commission recommended, and the Board approved, a provision to allow two households to split the cost of a single cart; to date, only 4 households have enrolled in this program.

Staff engaged in preliminary discussions with LRS regarding a potential transition to opt-out composting. LRS stated that in order to make the transition, they would need a 3-year extension to the current contract to offset the cost of an additional truck needed to provide the service. LRS stated they would need to transition from 3 cart size options to a universal 65-gallon cart, with those currently utilizing a 35-gallon or 95-gallon cart being grandfathered in. LRS would also need to charge \$12 per household regardless of if they opted-out. This information was provided to the Board; no action has since been taken.

The current contract with LRS is set to expire April 30, 2027. A greater number of households already enrolled in the program would make any potential transition to universal or opt-out composting less costly to Village residents, should such a program be adopted as part of the Village's next waste hauling contract.

The attached chart compares food scrap and compost collection programs in various Illinois Municipalities

**Attachments:** Illinois Food Scrap and Composting Coalition Municipal Food Scrap Material Program Chart

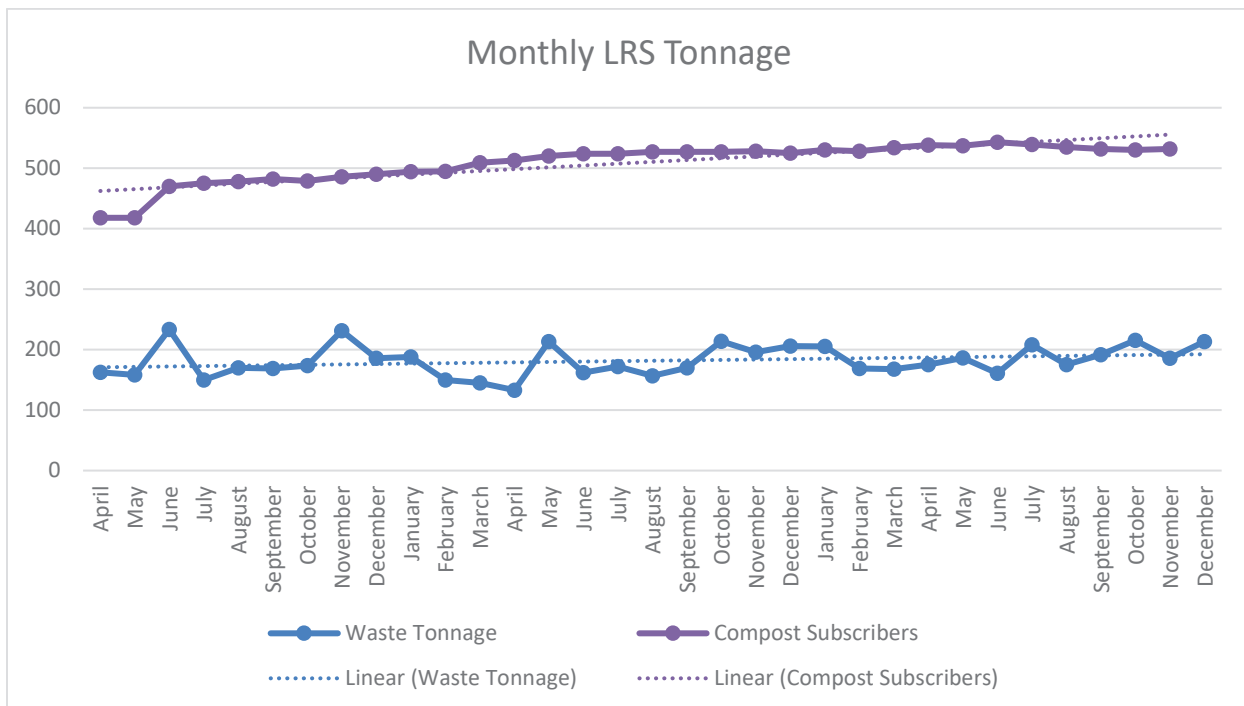


**Village of River Forest**  
**Public Works and Engineering**  
 400 Park Avenue  
 River Forest, IL 60305  
 Tel: 708-366-8500

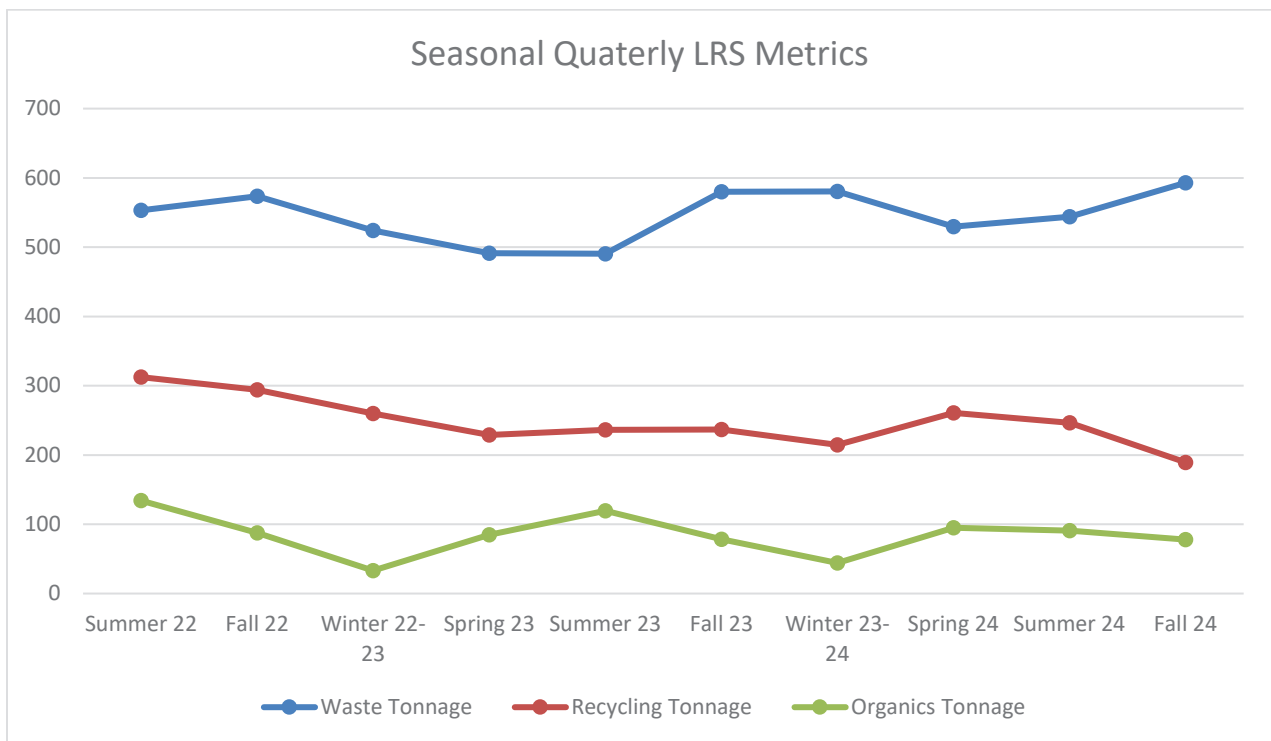
**MEMORANDUM**

Date: February 11, 2025  
 To: Sustainability Commission  
 From: Seth Jansen, Management Analyst  
 Subj: Quarterly Waste Tonnage Report

Following discussion at the May 2024 meeting, the Commission has decided to receive quarterly reports on the LRS Tonnage Metrics. The Commission felt it was most prudent to highlight two metrics specific moving forward within the quarterly reports: the number of compost subscribers, specifically the impact of the cart sharing program rollout, and the waste tonnage, as reduction in waste tonnage is the driving metric at reducing landfill tonnage whether it be through diversion or reduced consumption. Currently only 4 households are participating in the compost sharing program, indicating further need to promote the program. The below chart illustrates the waste tonnage and compost subscribers, with linear trend lines.



The previously quarterly memos found, for both annual and monthly data, weak positive correlations between waste tonnage and recycling tonnage and between waste tonnage and organics tonnage, meaning years with greater amounts of yard waste or recycling generally saw greater amounts of waste tonnage as well. Analysis of quarterly data found weak negative correlations to waste tonnage for both recycling and organics. Further analysis of seasonal months, rather than quarterly calendar months, produced similar weak negative correlation between waste and recycling and between waste and organics. Because there does appear to be seasonally correlated fluctuation between waste and organics staff will continue to monitor seasonal quarterly data for those metrics, which area updated below. The below chart illustrates the seasonal quarterly data for waste, recycling, and organics. This focused on full seasonal quarters since the beginning of the LRS contract (Summer 2022 through fall 2024).



**Attachment:** LRS Monthly Report, December 2024



# VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST



Collection Period	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	YTD TOTAL	AVG/MTH
Active Customers	2,890	2,890	2,891	2,905	2,900	2,900	2,900	2,900	2,903	2,904	2,902	2,902	34,787	2899
Compost Subscribers	525	530	528	534	538	537	543	539	535	532	530	532	6,403	534
Recycling Tons	90.92	63.75	77.83	91.17	91.68	78.71	86.43	81.56	55.90	67.97	65.51	87.23	938.66	78.22
Recycling lbs	181840	127500	155660	182340	183360	157420	172860	163120	111800	135940	131020	174460	1877320	156443.33
2024 Recy lbs/Cust	62.92	44.12	53.84	62.77	63.23	54.28	59.61	56.25	38.51	46.81	45.15	60.12	647.60	53.97
Organics Tons	26.33	8.56	7.62	28.69	58.43	26.09	37.07	27.45	24.10	30.46	23.27	17.91	315.98	26.33
Organics lbs	52660	17,120.00	15,240.00	57,380.00	116,860.00	52,180.00	74,140.00	54,900.00	48,200.00	60,920.00	46,540.00	35,820.00	631,960.00	52663.333
2024 Organics lbs/Cust	18.22	5.92	5.27	19.75	40.30	17.99	25.57	18.93	16.60	20.98	16.04	12.34	205.57	18.69
2024 Recycle & Organics Diversion %	36.33%	29.96%	33.72%	40.59%	44.63%	39.47%	37.23%	38.36%	29.45%	31.37%	32.32%	33.02%	493.43%	41.12%
Trash Tons	205.49	169.08	167.96	175.40	186.25	160.70	208.20	175.16	191.64	215.37	185.93	213.26	2,254.44	187.87
Trash lbs	410980	338160	335920	350800	372500	321400	416400	350320	383280	430740	371860	426520	4508880	340363
2024 Trash lbs/Cust	142.21	117.01	116.20	120.76	128.45	110.83	143.59	120.80	132.03	148.33	128.14	146.97	1,408.33	128.02
Total Tons	322.74	241.39	253.41	295.26	336.36	265.50	331.70	284.17	271.64	313.80	274.71	318.40	3,190.68	290.06
Total lbs	645480	482,780	506,820	590,520	672,720	531,000	663,400	568,340	543,280	627,600	549,420		6,381,360	580123.63
2024 Total lbs/Cust	0.00	167.05	175.31	203.28	231.97	183.10	228.76	195.98	187.14	216.12	189.32	0.00	2,201.39	200.13
2024 White Goods Count	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2024 Stickers Sold	0	0	1,500	1,500	7,000	1,500	3,000	4,000	1,500	1,500	1,000	1,000	23,500	1,958
2024 E-WASTE Event Tons	0	0	1.7	0	0	0	0	0	1.22	0	0	0	2.92	0.26
2024 E-Waste Participation	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	30	0	0	0	34	3.09
2024 HHW Event Tons	0	0	0	0	0	0.23	0	0	0	0.28	0	0	0.51	0.04

Yard Waste Facility	LRS MAYWOOD TRANSFER STATION (1201 Greenwood Ave, Maywood, IL 60153)
Recycling Facility	LRS MAYWOOD TRANSFER STATION ( 1201 Greenwood Ave, Maywood, IL 60153), LRS HEARTLAND RECYCLING
RECYCLING PURCHASED BY	RESOURCED TO VARIOUS DOMESTIC BUYERS
Trash Facility	LRS MAYWOOD TRANSFER STATION ( 1201 Greenwood Ave, Maywood, IL 60153)