



VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION

Tuesday, November 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
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 by 4:00 PM on Tuesday, November 11, 2025.

AGENDA

1. Call to Order/Roll Call
2. Public Comment
3. Adoption of Meeting Minutes for October 14, 2025
4. Commissioner Updates
5. Bird City Illinois and Migratory Bird Update
6. Native Plants Discussion
7. Communications and Staff Reports
 - a. Quarterly Waste Report
 - b. Project Updates
 - c. Communications
8. Schedule Next Meeting – December 9, 2025
9. Adjournment

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

A regular meeting of the Village of River Forest Sustainability Commission was held on Tuesday, October 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-Chair Charrette, Commissioners Kadlec, Avalos, Hoyt, and Marti, Student
Commissioner Stierwalt

Absent: Co-Chair Lennon, Commissioner Hayley

Also Present: Staff Liaison Seth Jansen

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

3. ADOPTION OF MEETING MINUTES

Commissioner Marti made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Kadlec, to approve the meeting minutes from September 9, 2025.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Co-Chair Charrette, Commissioners Kadlec, Avalos, Hoyt, and Marti, Student
Commissioner Stierwalt

Absent: Co-Chair Lennon, Commissioner Hayley

Motion Passes.

4. COMMISSIONER UPDATES

Commissioner Kadlec attended a community event in Franklin Park with the Xerces Society that was part of Village of Franklin Park's Bee City and Tree City public events. Commissioner Kadlec also plugged upcoming sustainability events at Triton College; Mr. Jansen indicated he would add them to the sustainability events page on the Village website.

Commissioner Avalos indicated he would be attending the Illinois Environmental Council's Springfield lobby day to promote public transit and encourage phase out of Styrofoam. Commissioner Avalos also indicated the Triton Environmental Club would be hosting the director of the IEC at an event in November.

Commissioner Hoyt recommended promoting the Triton College events in a future newsletter. Commissioner Hoyt also recapped the Roosevelt Middle School native plant sale. Commissioner Hoyt stated that he observed river otters in Illinois while hiking the previous weekend.

Co-Chair Charrette attended the Forest Preserve green lawn equipment expo. Co-Chair Charrette also attended the Faith in Place Environmental Summit. Co-Chair Charrette also recommended the final interview with Jane Goodall.

5. BIRD CITY ILLINOIS UPDATE

Commissioner Hoyt met with the Director of the Trailside Museum at the Forest Preserve to discuss potential partnership in the Village attaining Bird City designation. The Forest Preserve is drafting an official letter of intent for the Forest Preserve to formally dedicate resources to the project. The Forest Preserve has existing relationships with Dominican and Concordia, along with Trinity High School, and would work to find ways to support their curricula through events such as bird walks. By building up these relationships incrementally, the hope is to eventually develop conservation recommendations to these institutions regarding the common nighthawk.

Commissioner Marti indicated interest in working through the Bird City designation process. He and Commissioner Hoyt indicated they would meet directly between meetings. The Commissioner discussed bird window collisions and bird mortalities and ways to raise awareness of the issue. Mr. Jansen offered staff support for any further updates in partnering with the Forest Preserve. Mr. Jansen also indicated the educational support events with other community partners could also serve as the public event component of the Bird City designation.

6. NATIVE PLANTS DISCUSSION

Mr. Jansen introduced the topic by briefly outlining actions previously done by the Commission and the Village with regards to native plants. Commissioner Hoyt proposed developing a native planting garden on Village property. The goal of the garden would be to add more native plants to Village property and to educate and encourage residents to add native plants to their yards as well. The commission discussed potential planting locations, including the areas near the community gardens at the pump station. The Commission discussed finding a planting location where it could be highlighted and visible for the community. Commissioner Hoyt stated that outside grant funding would likely be needed to fund this project. Commissioner Hoyt mentioned several small private grants that may be available. Mr. Jansen noted the Openlands/ComEd Green Region grant that had previously funded the Commission's Parkway Pollinator Project. Mr. Jansen indicated the grant opens in January with applications due in March. The Commission indicated interest in discussing the grant further at the January meeting to begin to develop an application. The Commission further discussed other potential planting location, specifically the parkways along the railroad tracks near Central Ave. and Hawthorne Ave. The Commission further discussed the native plant sale and seed propagation in helping residents plant their own native gardens.

7. COMMUNICATIONS AND STAFF REPORTS

Mr. Jansen outlined the revised draft of the Solar Energy Guide webpage within the sustainability section of the Village website. Mr. Jansen sought any final edits, comments, and revisions from the Commission before going live with it on the website.

Mr. Jansen outline the quarterly Electric Vehicle Report to the Commission. Mr. Jansen noted he would revised the registration number format to better illustrate the growth rate. Mr. Jansen further noted the electric vehicle permit numbers are likely limited to installation of Level 2 chargers at residences. Mr. Jansen highlighted the shift in usage at the Village Hall charging station following the shift in fee structure for EV charging.

Mr. Jansen provided updates on the EV Charging Station installation process and when the first two locations will come online. Mr. Jansen also noted the Village Board approved a contract to install solar panels on the roof of the public works garage, making the garage a net-zero facility. Mr. Jansen also explained design is still underway to convert the Village Hall parking lot to permeable pavers, indicating the project will likely be split into two portions with construction occurring in 2026 and 2027.

Mr. Jansen outlined the upcoming planned communications for the remainder of the year.

8. RECYCLING

Mr. Jansen outlined what the Recycle Coach program and explained that there will soon be a tool on the Village website as part of Recycle Coach that will help residents with finding where items should be disposed, what is accepted as part of the local recycling and composting program, and where special drop off locations and events are located. Mr. Jansen noted a lot of the functions, such as collection schedules and contact forms, may not be needed, but the educational features would likely be very helpful in directing residents to the right information and resources.

Mr. Jansen stated that the Village would be partnering with EcoShip again to serve as a special collection location for packaging goods at Village Hall during the holiday season. Any materials collected would be distributed to small businesses for reuse. Mr. Jansen noted there was a very high level of participation during the last collection in April.

Co-Chair Charrette outlined the Ridwell collection program for materials that cannot be recycled as part of curbside recycling collection. The program finds partners for each item or material that is collected to ensure it is reused or recycled properly.

Co-Chair Charrette stated the need to continue to communicate the effectiveness of curbside recycling programs and highlighting what the true rate of recycling is.

9. SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING – NOVEMBER 11, 2025

The Commission reached a consensus to hold its next meeting Tuesday, October 14, 2025.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Avalos made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Marti, to adjourn the meeting at 8:34PM.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Co-Chair Charrette, Commissioners Kadlec, Avalos, Hoyt, and Marti, Student Commissioner Stierwalt

Absent: Co-Chair Lennon, Commissioner Hayley

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

Seth Jansen, Secretary



TONI PRECKWINKLE
President

**Board of
Commissioners**

Frank J. Aguilar
Alma E. Anaya
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**General
Superintendent**

Adam Bianchi

October 20, 2025

RE: Designation of River Forest as an Illinois "Bird City"

To the members of the Sustainability Commission,

On behalf of the Forest Preserves of Cook County (FPCC), I am pleased to offer our support of the River Forest Sustainability Commission's effort to achieve designation for the Village of River Forest as an Illinois "Bird City."

This designation, administered by a consortium of organizations including the American Bird Conservancy, Environment for the Americas, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, encourages communities to promote education about birds, to organize communities in support of conservation-related programs, and to develop and implement effective local policies concerning the conservation of resident and migratory birds.

The Forest Preserves, one of the oldest and largest conservation districts in the United States, protects and manages more than 70,000 acres of public land that offer Cook County's five million residents opportunities for outdoor recreation and exploration. We organize and host a wide variety of birding programs throughout the year and believe that designating the Village of River Forest as a "Bird City" can be an effective way to celebrate birds, as well as underscore that each of us can take actions to promote healthy ecosystems.

Our staff at Trailside Museum of Natural History, located in River Forest, would welcome the opportunity to join your planning committee and work with the Village of River Forest to develop a feasible and meaningful pathway to achieve the Bird City Designation. Forest Preserve staff has extensive programming experience and many partnerships including with Trinity High School, public school District 90, Concordia University, and Dominican University, that could potentially support this effort.

We would be happy to collaborate with you on improving bird habitat within the Village of River Forest. If there is any other information that we can provide at this time, please do not hesitate to reach out to Adam Kessel, Nature Center Director at Trailside Museum of Natural History Adam.Kessel@cookcountyil.gov.

Sincerely,

Jacqui Ulrich

Director, Conservation & Experiential Programming

Bird City Illinois Designation for River Forest

Application Requirements

A minimum of 9 actions are required to be a Bird City in Illinois:

- (1) Action 3.7.1 from Category 3 (Bird City Illinois Resolution)
- (3) At least 3 actions from Category 1 (Habitat)
- (2) Both actions from 3.1 (World Migratory Bird Day - Adopt a proclamation to recognize WMBD AND hold a public event to celebrate WMBD)
- (3) At least 3 more actions from any of the categories: Category 1 (Habitat), Category 2 (Threats to Birds), Category 3 (Education and Engagement), Category 4 (Sustainability)

Current Action Status Summary

Completed Actions

- 1.1.5 - Demonstrate that your community has been awarded Tree City USA status by the National Arbor Day Foundation.
- 1.2.2 - Create and maintain a public demonstration garden including native plants to benefit birds, wildlife, and ecosystems. Select a highly visible location, consider signage and / or messaging about the space / process, plan for maintenance and monitoring.
- 4.2.3 - Demonstrate that your community participates in a community solar program or that a municipal building receives a significant percentage of its electricity from renewable energy.

Mandatory Actions

- 3.1.1 - **Proclamation**: Attach a copy of your community's officially-enacted WMBD proclamation. The proclamation must be presented annually. (MANDATORY)
- 3.1.2 - **Host a World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD) event annually** to celebrate birds in your community and to raise awareness of migratory birds, threats to their populations, and ways you can help to protect them.
- 3.7.1 - **Resolution**: Attach a copy of your community's officially-enacted Bird City Illinois resolution.

Optional Actions

- One additional action from Category 1
- Two additional actions from any of Category 1,2,3 or 4

Color Key:

Completed Actions

Mandatory Actions

Optional Actions

River Forest can fast-track to a Bird City designation by implementing easy-to-implement actions. Alternatively, the village can use the Bird City designation process to guide its efforts to make substantial, impactful, long-term contributions to improve the sustainability footprint of the village.

3 Mandatory Actions

3.1.1 - **Proclamation**: Attach a copy of your community's officially-enacted WMBD proclamation. The proclamation must be presented annually. (MANDATORY)

3.1.2 - **Host a World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD) event annually** to celebrate birds in your community and to raise awareness of migratory birds, threats to their populations, and ways you can help to protect them. Your WMBD may be an education program, an educational bird walk, and/or a festival. It should incorporate the current conservation theme and may include components of past themes. For this event, birds must be the focus and should not be tagged onto other events.

In your narrative, include 1) the date, timing, and 2) description of the event and 3) detail how you incorporated the WMBD theme. 4) Please register your event and include a link to your event on the WMBD map in your narrative. Timing and scope of event TBD locally. (MANDATORY)

Find current theme materials and register your event at
<https://www.migratorybirdday.org/>

3.7.1 - **Resolution**: Attach a copy of your community's officially-enacted Bird City Illinois resolution. This must be a resolution that is voted on and passed by the appropriate municipal council/board. Do not submit a proclamation. The resolution must be voted on and passed every three years. (MANDATORY)

Category 1 – Habitat (Must choose 3 actions)

1 . 1 . Promote best management of community habitat

1.1.1 - Community has assessed all natural areas, developed a habitat master plan to create additional natural areas and habitat corridors connecting them.

1.1.2 - Document that current community planning seeks to provide additional bird habitat.

1.1.3 - Demonstrate through public documents or publicity that the local Audubon chapter (or a similar group) takes an active role in the planning process for protecting and enlarging favorable bird habitat.

1.1.4 - Demonstrate that your community understands the critical ecological role of pollinators by documenting your Bee City USA status or by describing another substantial effort to promote pollinator health such as participating in the Illinois Monarch project.

1.1.5 - Demonstrate that your community has been awarded Tree City USA status by the National Arbor Day Foundation.

1 . 2 . Create and protect habitat

1.2.1 - Document a recent project that created or restored bird habitat in your community. How many acres or square footage did that include?

1.2.2 - Create and maintain a public demonstration garden including native plants to benefit birds, wildlife, and ecosystems. Select a highly visible location, consider signage and / or messaging about the space / process, plan for maintenance and monitoring.

1.2.3 - Demonstrate how a public golf course is managed to benefit birds.

1.2.4 - Show that your community maximizes the value of right-of-way space (e.g., power lines, pipelines, etc.) by planting them with native grasses, shrubs, herbs, and other prairie/grassland plants.

1.2.5 - Provide evidence (e.g., official designation of natural areas, easements, etc.) that existing bird habitat within community limits has legal protection. (Exclusions: Leash laws; prohibitions against disturbing nests and wildlife; areas consisting primarily of mowed grass)

Category 1 - Habitat

1 . 3 . Promote native plants

1.3.1 - Document a program to support the establishment of natural lawns and native landscaping, by offering training (e.g. presentations, workshops, workdays) on native plantings for birds, pollinators, water quality. Examples can include public presentations of Audubon's Plants for Birds Initiative or Homegrown National Park.

1.3.2 - Work with local growers and suppliers to increase / ensure supply of locally appropriate native plants. Cultivate and publicize reliable suppliers. Organize, support or promote native plant sales.

1.3.3 - Attach a copy of a local ordinance demonstrating that your community does not restrict natural/native landscaping that emphasizes native plants and non-turf lawns. Consider improving existing regulations to improve emphasis on natives.

1 . 4 . Control invasive plants

1.4.1 - Show how the community offers the public information on control and removal of invasive species.

1 . 5 . Provide nesting habitat

1.5.1 - Develop and manage a program to create and monitor nest structures.

1 . 7 . Ensure clean water in natural waterways

1.7.1 - Bring community stakeholders together to discuss and plan projects for conserving water and improving water quality.

1.7.2 - The community has established a storm water management program that reduces polluted runoff and ensures protection for wetlands (including riparian and other aquatic ecosystems) and also promotes use of native plantings to accomplish management goals.

1.7.3 - Reduce sources of water pollution through clean-up events, identification and mitigation of run-off and/or point sources and promoting regulation to control these inputs.

Category 2 - Threats to Birds

2 . 1 . Address disturbance by harmful species

2.1.1 - Describe your community's educational program to control free-roaming cats and/or the manner in which you actively publicize the Cats Indoors! Initiative.

2.1.2 - Limit disturbance of birds from humans and/or pets in natural areas by enforcing leash laws, exclusion zones and pet waste disposal rules, especially during certain seasons (breeding, stopover).

2.1.3 - Discourage or prohibit feeding where disease might be a risk for wild or domestic birds.

2 . 2 . Address collisions with glass

2.2.1 - Demonstrate that your community provides property owners with information on how to protect birds from window strikes (e.g., online links, brochures).

2.2.2 - Document that a municipal or major public building has been awarded LEED certification as a bird-friendly building (LEED SSpc 55 or comparable).

2.2.3 - Attach your community's ordinance that requires new buildings to be built following bird-safe design, construction, and operation guidelines (e.g., Toronto Green Standard, see Ecology: Bird Deterrence; San Francisco).

2 . 3 . Address light pollution

2.3.1 - Provide information about the impact of light pollution and how residents and businesses can reduce artificial light at night (ALAN).

2.3.2 - Inventory all municipal lighting (building, facility, street) for Dark Sky compliance, develop a plan including timeline and priority actions.

2.3.3 - Document your community's strategy to reduce light pollution and encourage broad participation, particularly during migratory seasons.

2.3.4 - Document that your community has outdoor lighting regulation(s) to reduce the impacts of light pollution such as requiring Dark Sky compliant bulbs and fixtures for all or certain buildings and requiring operational approaches such as following established "Lights Out" protocols, especially during migration.

Category 2 - Threats to Birds

2 . 4 . Address direct human-related threats

2.4.1 - Implement actions to reduce pollution and associated entanglement and ingestion risks (e.g. fees or bans on single-use plastics, secure collection for fishing line / trash, clean up events).

2.4.2 - Regulate siting, construction, and operations of infrastructure (e.g. solar, power, communications, wind, transportation including roads and bridges) to reduce risk to birds.

2 . 5 . Address the threat of pesticides and other toxins

2.5.1 - Create and conduct an educational campaign on the impacts of pesticides and herbicides on bird populations and include practical information on solutions including Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and other natural controls.

2.5.2 - Encourage and promote the use of non-lead tackle and ammunition. Work with local sportsman's clubs to include related education in hunter education / gun safety.

2.5.3 - Reduce toxins / hazards by providing for and / or coordinating cleanup of lead ammunition on gun ranges and / or lead tackle (and fishing line) at fishing areas.

2.5.4 - Show that your municipality practices Integrated Pest Management or comparable, using natural pest control and the best available science to minimize pesticide and herbicide use.

2.5.5 - Ban the sale and private, agricultural and municipal use of specific toxic pesticide and herbicide products. Examples include the herbicide glyphosate (Roundup), as well as chlorpyrifos and neonicotinoid pesticides.

2.5.6 - Prohibit the use of lead ammunition and tackle on municipal land or more broadly within your community.

Category 3 – Education & Engagement

3 . 2 . Increase awareness of birds and their habitats

3.2.1 - Provide web links or a community newsletter demonstrating that your community educates property owners on methods to create and enhance backyard habitat for birds.

3.2.2 - Educate the community about bird conservation issues, the actions the community has taken / is taking, and actions that can be taken at home.

3.2.3 - Demonstrate that your community actively raises awareness of its bird assets. Examples include placing a remote web camera on a nest platform, offering regular, public bird watching field trips, promoting Important Bird Areas (IBAs), birding hotspots, birding trails and phenomena (e.g., raptor, waterfowl, or songbird migration, congregating), in your area and/or creating a significant educational resource on your community's bird life.

3.2.4 - Develop a birding checklist for your area and make it available to citizens and tourist outlets in print and/or online. Consider working with students and/or community to create.

3.2.5 - Provide a link to your community's Bird City Illinois webpage, which must be visible from the main page of your municipal website (it may be located at the first level of a drop-down menu on the main page but cannot be any less visible) OR demonstrate that your Bird City effort has a significant social media presence.

3.2.6 - Create and distribute regular bird and bird conservation related content for online and news media (newsletters, blog posts, press releases, social media posts).

Category 3 – Education & Engagement

3.2.7 - Describe your community-sponsored environmental festival, such as an Earth Day, Conservation, or Sustainability event, with a bird education component. (This is in addition to WMBD).

3.2.8 - The community provides information regarding safe and responsible wildlife rescue & assistance, including contact information for aligned organizations & locally permitted wildlife rehabilitators.

3.2.9 - Document that your community maintains a birding trail or hot spot location with educational signage and/or literature. (Note: A birding hotspot alone is not sufficient – your community must actively promote birding and public education at the site itself.).

3.2.10 - Promote birding and enhance amenities at one or more birding locations. Examples include: facilitating early / off hours, access to restricted areas, improved signage, enhancing amenities (trails, blinds, observation towers, boardwalks, decks), improving security.

3.2.11 - Document that a municipal building has significant bird-friendly landscaping that features native plants AND signage that explains the importance of native plants and providing diverse habitat for birds (e.g., brush piles, water features).

3.2.12 - Encourage public art focused on birds through installments, awards, events, competitions.

3.2.13 - Create, support, or assist an injured bird response team to help licensed rehabilitators in taking calls and responding to reports of injured birds.

Category 3 – Education & Engagement

3 . 3 . Educate and engage all ages

3.3.1 - Document a substantial regular educational program appropriate for children, youth, and families on any bird and conservation related programs, such as climate change, energy efficiency, green/bird-safe buildings, or environmental sustainability, etc.

3.3.2 - Demonstrate that schools in your community participate in a nationally-recognized environmental/bird-related education program (e.g., Flying WILD, Audubon Adventures), incorporate such curriculum into their formal and informal learning environments, or that your community organizes its own substantial conservation education and outreach program for young people.

3.3.3 - Show how your community aids a local youth group (e.g., Boy Scouts of America, Girl Scouts of USA, 4-H Club, etc.) or conservation group in bird conservation projects (e.g., bluebird trail or nest box monitoring, habitat restoration, Wood Duck nest boxes, bird surveys, etc.).

3.3.4 - Demonstrate that your community's academic / corporate / community campuses have adopted practices that establish bird habitat and/or actively reduce threats to birds, ideally including students / employees / members.

3 . 4 . Ensure access to nature

3.4.1 - Plan and budget for parks, green spaces, water features, trails and habitat connections in all new development areas, and especially where such spaces and connections are lacking.

3.4.2 - Show that your community works with traditionally underserved communities to increase their access to natural areas, environmental education, birding resources, and conservation activities.

6/9 3.4.3 - Create demonstration bird-friendly landscape(s) on community property accessible by diverse groups.

3.4.4 - Offer multilingual programs and/or materials at environmental events.

3.4.5 - Develop one or more accessible nature / birding sites for visitors regardless of physical abilities.

3.4.6 - Identify and address other barriers to nature / birding access (e.g. hazardous plants, insects, animals, roads, areas).

Category 3 – Education & Engagement

3 . 5 . Involve the community in conservation and stewardship

3.5.1 - Designate a community mascot or city bird species selected through a public engagement process.

3.5.2 - Highlight traditional knowledge and approaches to conservation. Determine the indigenous traditional territory(ies) where your community occurs. Describe efforts to encourage the participation and perspective of local Indigenous community(ies) in the initiative.

This website <https://native-land.ca/> can be used to help map Indigenous territories, treaties, and languages.

3.5.3 - Illustrate a program that involves schools, garden clubs, or other organizations in bird conservation activities.

3.5.4 - Research Important Bird Areas (IBAs) or similar special habitats or bird resources in your community and encourage stewardship activities to protect them. Examples include bird and/or habitat monitoring, restoration, invasive species removal, advocacy. May include formation of a dedicated stewardship group.

3.5.5 - Create and maintain bird feeding stations at parks, nature centers, schools and tourism / lodging sites. Consider incorporating education or monitoring activities. Note: It would be important to monitor the feeding stations for large usage by nonnative House Sparrows and ensure visitors are not feeding improper foods.

3.5.6 - Host community planting event(s) to create or restore native bird habitat on municipal property. May include per event or dedicated on-going volunteer participation.

3.5.7 - Work with partners in the non-profit, governmental and corporate / business sectors to adopt bird-friendly practices and help sustain the Bird City program.

Category 3 – Education & Engagement

3 . 6 . Promote scientific research and monitoring

3.6.1 - Set up systems for community science participation (e.g. setting up accounts and projects within existing platforms like eBird and iNaturalist and protocols and training for participation).

3.6.2 - Demonstrate that your community is represented in at least one citizen science bird monitoring program (e.g., the Christmas Bird Count, Midwest Crane Count, Climate Watch, Great Backyard Bird Count, Swift Night Out, Audubon Climate Watch, D-Bird, Globe at Night, Nestwatch, FeederWatch, Hummingbirds at Home,, the Big Sit, Marsh Monitoring, Global Bird Rescue, or other actively coordinated community science project).

3.6.3 - Attach results from organized bird monitoring or data obtained from researchers or volunteers in the local park system. (Exclusions: Programs that receive credit under 3.6.2: Christmas Bird Count, Great Backyard Bird Count, Midwest Crane Count, Climate Watch, etc.)

Category 4 - Sustainability

4 . Sustainability

4 . 1 . Educate residents about climate impacts and renewable energy

4.1.1 - Describe your community's efforts to educate residents about climate change, effects on birds/biodiversity, and solutions.

4 . 2 . Reduce energy use and carbon emissions

4.2.1 - Document an energy audit for municipal building(s) and show that your community is working to implement its recommendations.

4.2.2 - Create a community plan to reduce energy use and carbon emissions through operational or building design changes, nature-based solutions, renewable energy use.

4.2.3 - Demonstrate that your community participates in a community solar program or that a municipal building receives a significant percentage of its electricity from renewable energy.

4 . 3 . Promote sustainable infrastructure and practices

4.3.1 - Adopt nature-based solutions (e.g. keeping water at surface, green roofs, tree cover, wetlands) adding natural features and / or processes into the built environment to promote adaptation and resilience and increase biodiversity.

4.3.2 - Demonstrate community recognition or certification by a recognized rigorous sustainability program.

4.3.3 - Show that your community goes above and beyond in its support for, and implementation of, green transportation (e.g., bike trails, rideshare programs, bike trails/lanes, etc.). Be sure to utilize the narrative to illustrate why your community is exceptional because standard practice will not receive credit.

4.3.4 - Document recognition or certification of an energy efficient municipal building (LEED certified silver or higher or comparable).

4.3.5 - Describe your community's sustainability initiatives (e.g.: recycling/reuse, composting, water reuse, energy savings, lighting, carbon footprint) and/or describe how your municipality has incentive programs for installing sustainable systems and nature-based solutions.

4.3.6 - Require new buildings to be certified by a recognized sustainability program (LEED or comparable).



Village of River Forest
Public Works and Engineering

400 Park Avenue
River Forest, IL 60305
Tel: 708-366-8500

MEMORANDUM

Date: November 11, 2025
To: Sustainability Commission
From: Seth Jansen, Management Analyst
Subj: Native Plants Discussion Memo

At the October meeting of the Sustainability Commission, the Commission discussed how a native plant installation on Village property could educate residents about the benefits of native plants by serving as a visible example of what is possible at properties, public and private, throughout the Village. This would also achieve one of the recommendations from the UIC Climate Plans regarding native plants, as outlined in the September 2025 Commission meeting packet. Specifically, such a project would support biodiversity through native vegetation installations on private and public lands by educating the general public on the benefits of planting native vegetation.

From 2018 through 2020, the Village and the Sustainability Commission undertook a grant funded project known as Parkways for Pollinators. This program was supported by through grants by the Oak Park River Forest Community Foundation in 2018 and 2019 and a grant from the ComEd/Openlands Green Region Grant in 2020. The program was administered in partnership with the Deep Roots Project, who completed the plantings and maintenance. Commission documents indicated the project was discontinued in 2021 due to expiration of the grant funding and staff turnover within the Deep Roots Project. Over the course of the project, 2200 square feet of native garden were planted at 55 parkway locations throughout the Village.

Following completion of the Chicago Ave. Bioswales, two additional properties were incorporated into the native plant maintenance program. These two locations were the Public Works Garage, which contained a small section of native plants in front of the building, and a location along Hawthorne Ave. near the Metra entrance, in which native plants were placed between the sidewalk and the wall for the rail line. Little documentation is available on the plantings at these locations, but contracted maintenance was eventually discontinued.

Attachment:

- 2020 Sustainability Commission Plan – Native Plant sections
- Previous Village Native Plant locations – Maps and photos

ECOSYSTEMS

Action Plan Goals 4:07,14; 8:23,25,26, 33; 9:16

Gardens -- Parkways for Pollinators (P4P) -- Village of River Forest Parkways for Pollinators Program

Owner(s): Susan Charrette, Village of River Forest Sustainability Commission
David Murphy, The Deep Roots Project

Objective(s): Sequester carbon and enhance support for eco-systems with a focus on pollinators.

Strategy:

- Provide habitat for Monarch butterflies per the Mayors Monarch Pledge.
- Educate residents on the benefit of native plantings and importance of pollinators.

Tactics:

- Increase the square footage of native plantings throughout the Village of River Forest (VRF) to support pollinators and mitigate flooding through the use of native plants.
- Plant sun and shade gardens composed exclusively of native species on village-owned parkways to attract native pollinators and butterflies.
- Encourage residents to participate by offering these gardens at no cost for block parties and children's parties.
- Offer gardens to schools throughout the village at no cost as an activity for Green Groups (e.g., Green4Good, Trinity HS Horticulture Club, etc.).
- The Deep Roots Project performs the garden prep, planting, spring clean-up and mulching; resident garden host to water, weed and maintain the garden.
- Create and maintain informational material on the VRF website, evolving as the program evolves.
- Input the gardens on the Green America Climate Victory Garden map as well as on the VRF native garden map.

Status: The program is funded through grants from The Oak Park River Forest Community Foundation, PlanItGreen and the ComEd Openlands Program for three years from 2018 through 2020.

Impact: 2,200 square feet of new native plantings have been added throughout River Forest. In addition, over 1800 residents at block parties have been exposed to the highly visible gardens which serve to educate all residents about native plants and their benefits.

Year	Funding Source (Amount)	# of Gardens Planted	# of Gardens Maintained	Square Feet Planted	Total Square Feet	Annual Budget
2018	OPRF Community Foundation (\$6,500)	15	0	600	600	\$6,500
2019	PlanItGreen (\$7,500) VRF (\$350)	20	15	800	1400	\$7,850
2020	PlanItGreen (\$5,000) ComEd Openlands (\$5,000)	20	35	800	2200	\$10,000

2020 Action:

- Submit Annual Program Reports
 - To PlanItGreen in 2019 -- COMPLETE
 - To PlanItGreen and ComEd Openlands in 2020
- Increase the FY2020 budget to cover increased costs – COMPLETE
 - Mulching almost twice as many gardens (35 in 2020 vs. 15 in 2019 vs. 0 in 2018)
 - Adding a second garden examination once the plants are in bloom to ensure garden quality with action take at additional cost

- In 2019, we “spruced up” three shade gardens planted in 2018 at an incremental cost of \$500; these gardens had been damaged due to lack of water and deer
- Evolve program execution to make it easier for The Deep Roots Project to deliver -- COMPLETE
 - Explore new methods for garden preparation to reduce labor as well as the amount of turf being composted
 - Limit the planting season to August and September
 - Over 75% of block parties requesting P4P Gardens in 2019 took place during this time period.
 - Limit the number of gardens that are planted in any one day during the planting season to no more than two (2).
 - Offer gardens to residents outside of Block Parties through an online application available via the Village of River Forest website.
- Expand the program by offering sun and shade gardens to Institutions and Places of Worship in 2020
- Define the vision and source of funding for the program after the 2020 season to cover ongoing maintenance and new plantings

ECOSYSTEMS

Gardens – Natives

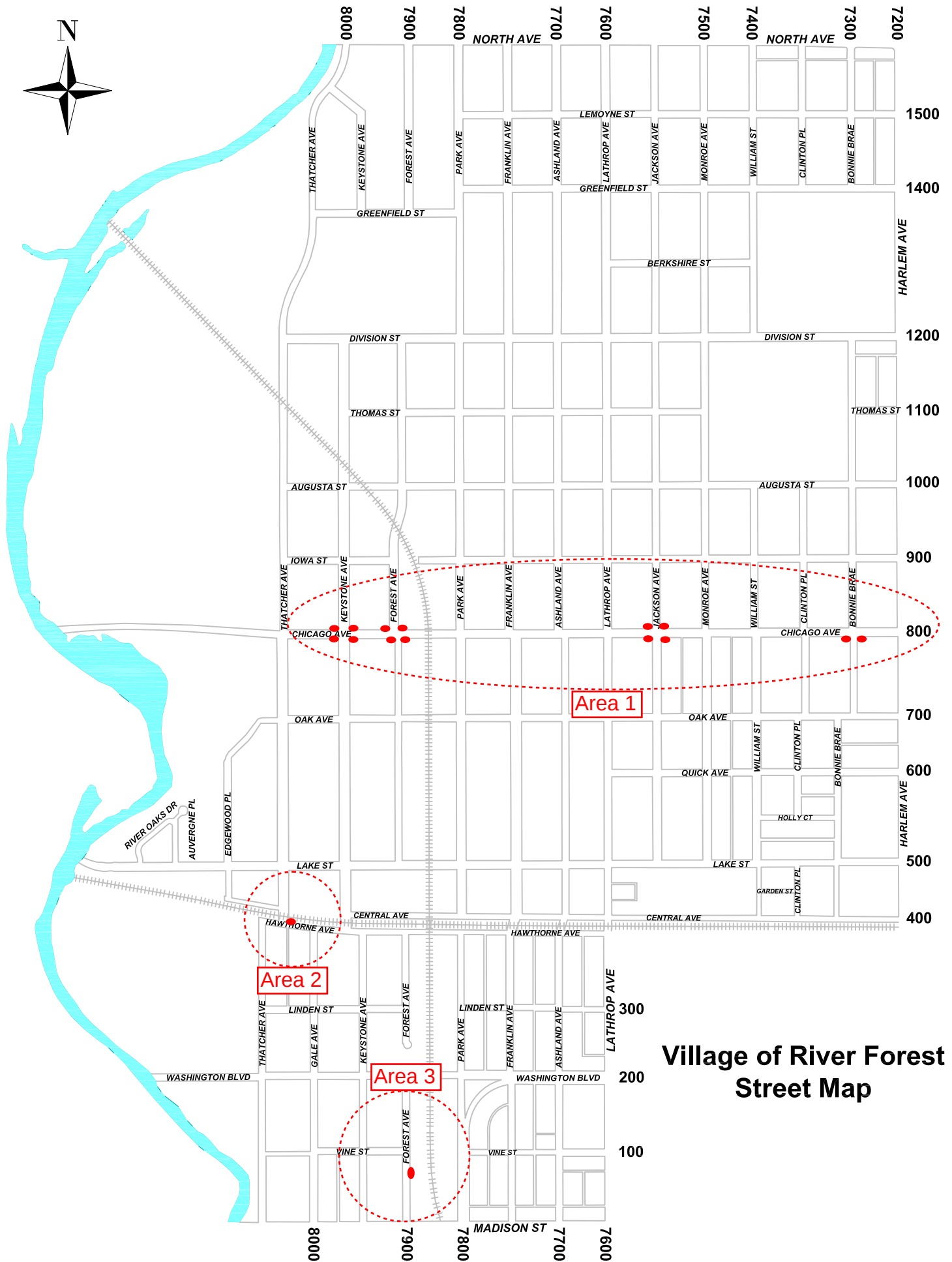
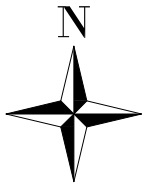
- Owner(s):** Susan Charrette, Village of River Forest Sustainability Commission
Mary Massella, Village of River Forest Resident (former Sustainability Commissioner)
Mark Janopoulos, Village of River Forest Public Works Department
- Objective:** Sequester carbon and enhance support for eco-systems.
- Strategy:** Encourage the growing of native plants across the Village of River Forest (VRF) on public land in place of turf and flowerbeds comprised of annual flowers and greenery.
- Tactics:** Work with Village of River Forest Public Works to design gardens that use native plants on VRF property.
- Status:** The RFSC has much success in the replacement of turf and annual gardens with native plantings with the following native plantings installed to date:

Garden Name	Garden Size (Square Feet)	Garden Location
Forest and Iowa Triangle Wildflower Garden	3,000	Forest & Iowa
Franklin and Hawthorne NW Native Garden	235	Franklin & Hawthorne
Keystone Sled Hill Wildflower Garden	7,250	Keystone & Hawthorne
Keystone Tennis Court Wildflower Garden	600	500 Forest Avenue
Memorial Parkway Butterfly Garden 1	100	Lake & Monroe NW
Memorial Parkway Butterfly Garden 2	100	Lake & Jackson NE
Memorial Parkway Butterfly Garden 3	100	Lake & Jackson NW
Memorial Parkway Butterfly Garden 4	100	Lake & Lathrop NE
Priory Park Wildflower Garden	4,000	Berkshire & William
Rain Garden @ NE Corner of Chicago and Forest	603	Chicago & Forest NE
Rain Garden @ NE Corner of Chicago and Jackson	513	Chicago & Jackson NE
Rain Garden @ NE Corner of Chicago and Keystone	468	Chicago & Keystone NE
Rain Garden @ NW Corner of Chicago and Forest	792	Chicago & Forest NW
Rain Garden @ NW Corner of Chicago and Jackson	513	Chicago & Jackson NW
Rain Garden @ NW Corner of Chicago and Keystone	477	Chicago & Keystone NW
Rain Garden @ SE Corner of Chicago and Bonnie Brae	513	Chicago & Bonnie Brae SE
Rain Garden @ SE Corner of Chicago and Forest	774	Chicago & Forest SE
Rain Garden @ SE Corner of Chicago and Jackson	504	Chicago & Jackson SE
Rain Garden @ SE Corner of Chicago and Keystone	513	Chicago & Keystone SE
Rain Garden @ SW Corner of Chicago and Bonnie Brae	513	Chicago & Bonnie Brae SW
Rain Garden @ SW Corner of Chicago and Forest	738	Chicago & Forest SW
Rain Garden @ SW Corner of Chicago and Jackson	513	Chicago & Jackson SW
Rain Garden @ SW Corner of Chicago and Keystone	513	Chicago & Keystone SW
River Forest Butterfly Garden	320	Hawthorne & Central
River Forest Depot Wildflower Garden	400	407 Thatcher Avenue
Washington Square Wildflower Garden	800	7901 Washington Blvd
TOTAL	24,952	

Impact: VRF has almost 25,000 square feet of native plantings on public land. All of these gardens have been input to the Victory Climate Garden Map @ <https://www.greenamerica.org/climate-victory-gardens/commitment-grow-climate-victory-garden>

2020 Action:

- Continue to work with RF Park District to monitor and increase native plantings.
- Continue to work with Village of River Forest Public Works to design gardens that use native plants on VRF property
 - Create a master plan for the village to add native plants along each side of the train tracks, along Central and Hawthorne.
 - Redesign the native plantings at the Waller Gates at Auvergne and Lake which were damaged by a car accident and subsequent repair work.
- Input new native gardens installed on VRF lands and add District 90's native gardens that qualify to the Victory Climate Garden Map @ <https://www.greenamerica.org/climate-victory-gardens/commitment-grow-climate-victory-garden>.



**Village of River Forest
Street Map**

AREA 2



AREA 3





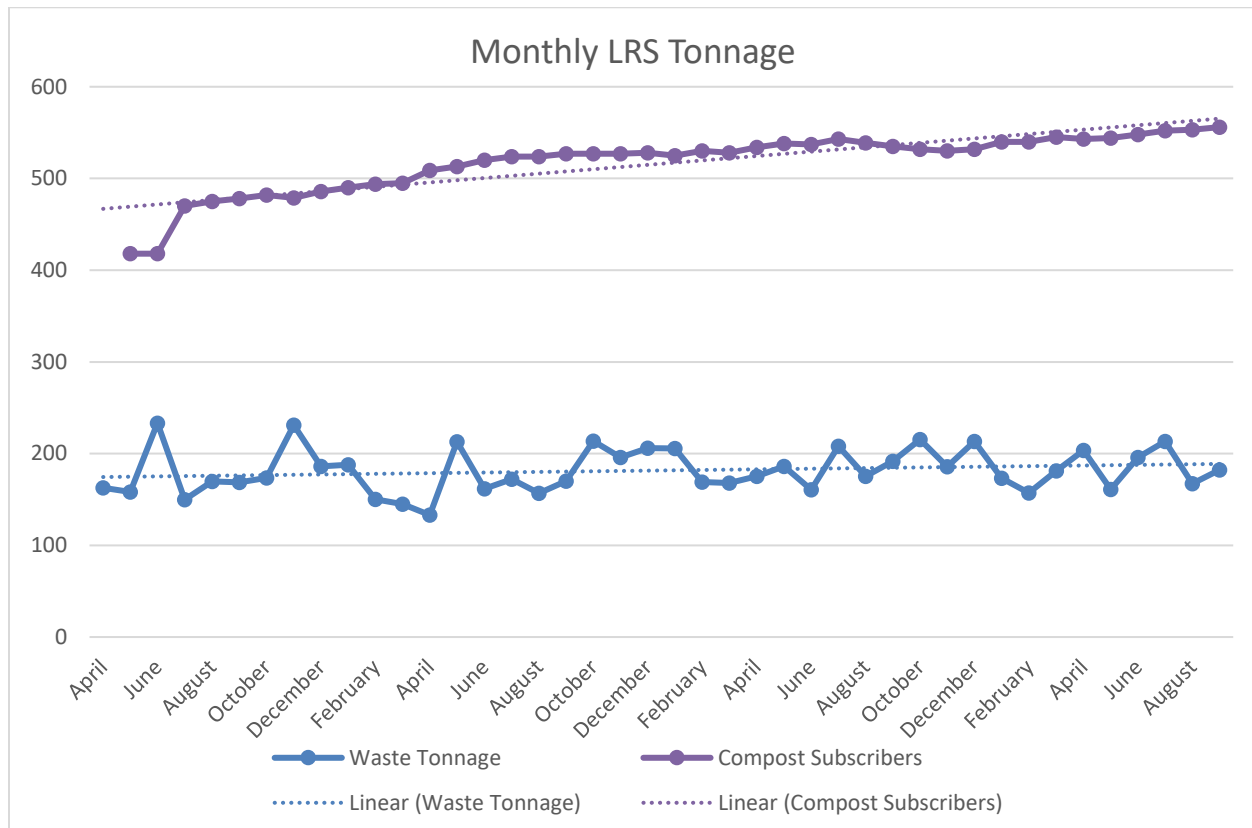
Village of River Forest Public Works and Engineering

400 Park Avenue
River Forest, IL 60305
Tel: 708-366-8500

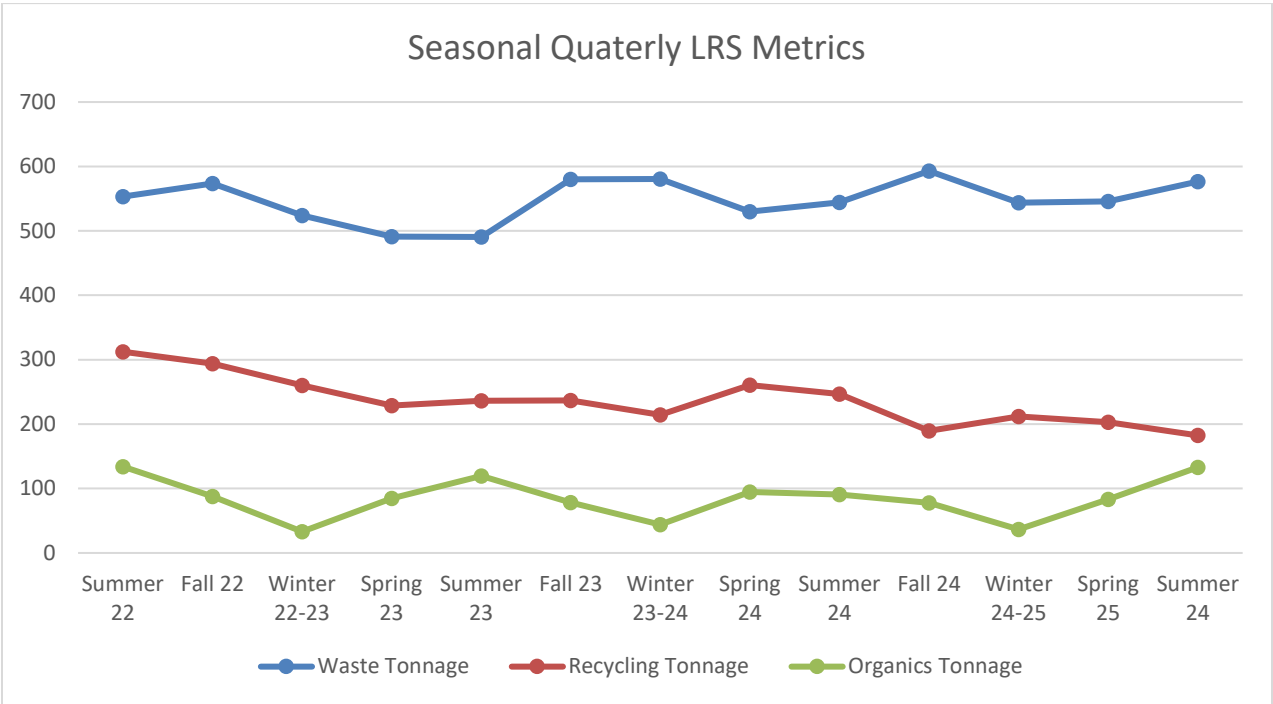
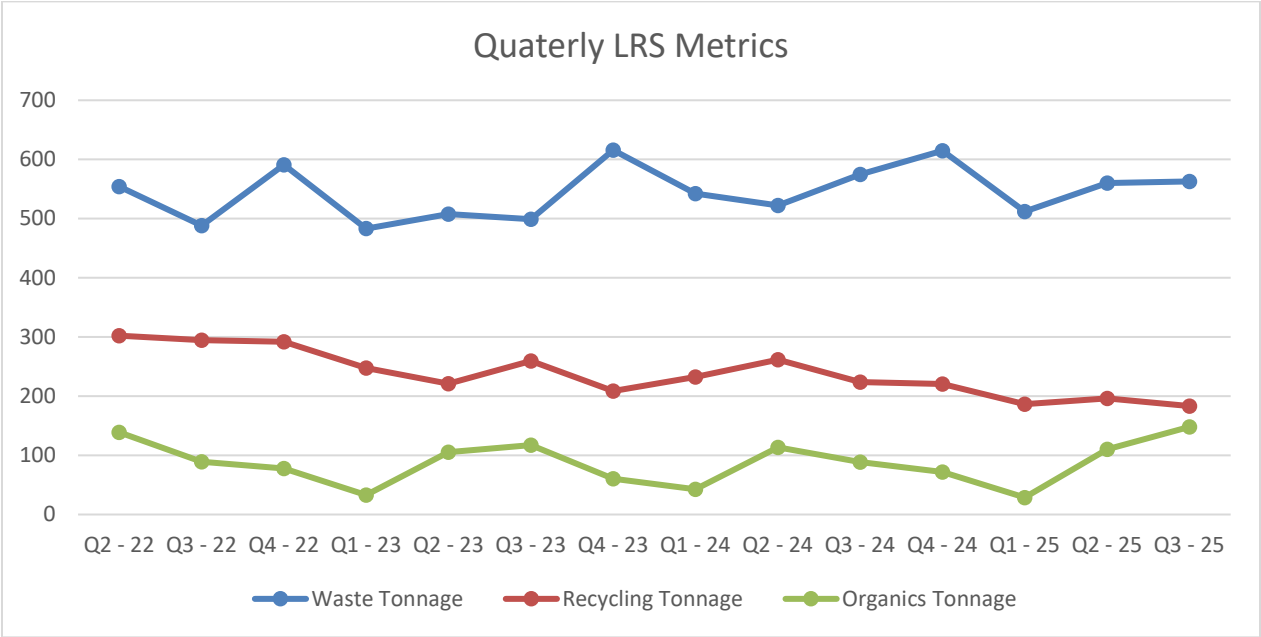
MEMORANDUM

Date: November 11, 2025
To: Sustainability Commission
From: Seth Jansen, Assistant to the Director of Public Works
Subj: Quarterly Waste Tonnage Report

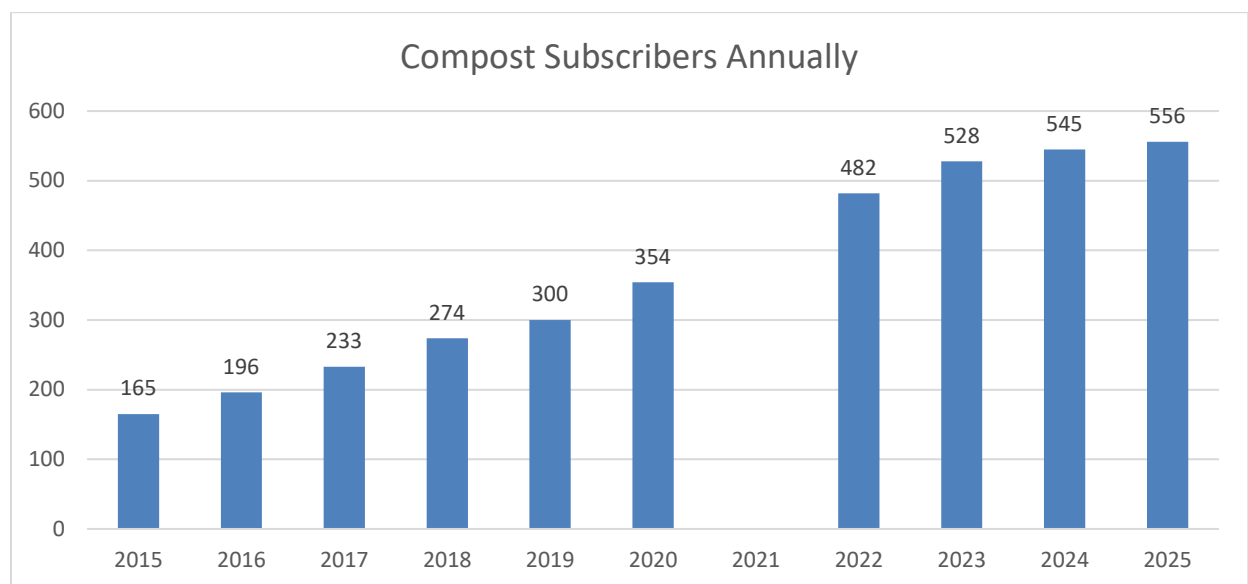
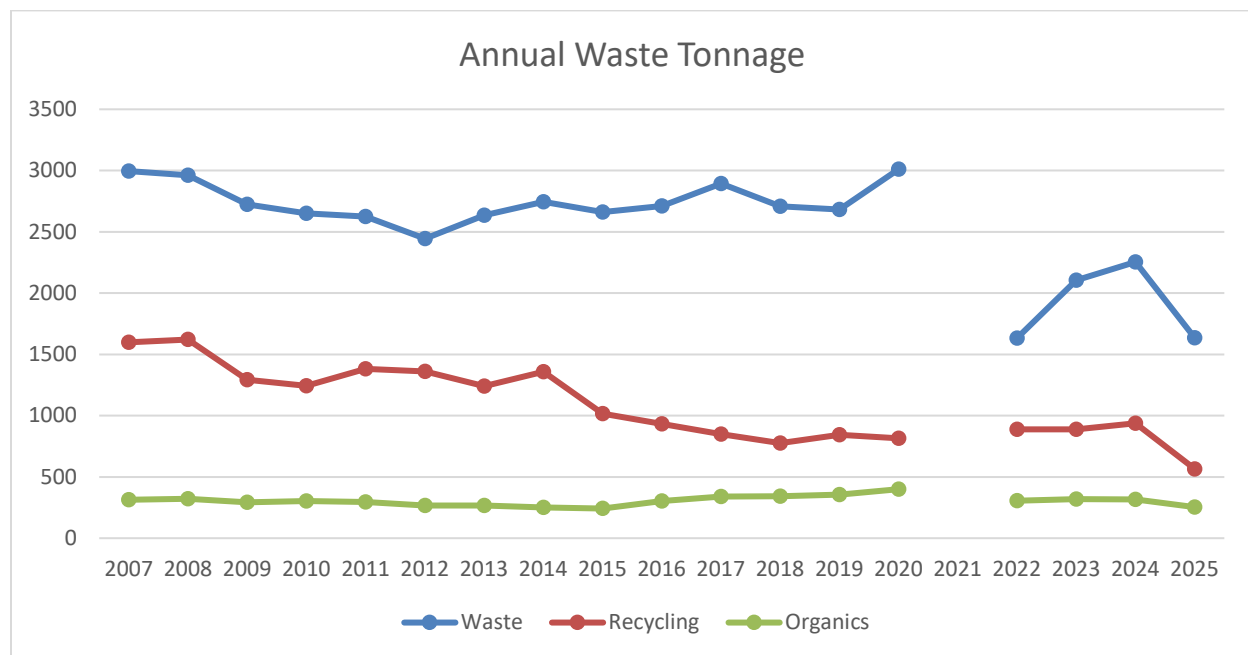
Following discussion at the May 2024 meeting, the Commission has decided to receive quarterly reports on the LRS Tonnage Metrics. The Commission felt it was most prudent to highlight two specific metrics moving forward within the quarterly reports: the number of compost subscribers and the waste tonnage. Reduction in waste tonnage is the driving metric at reducing landfill tonnage whether it be through diversion or reduced consumption. A goal of the Commission is to expand composting generally to help prevent organic waste from being landfilled. Currently only 8 households are participating in the compost sharing program, with two additional households utilizing the option starting in August 2025. The chart below illustrates the waste tonnage and compost subscribers, with linear trend lines.



In previously quarterly memos found, analysis of seasonal months produced seasonally correlated fluctuation between waste and organics. This correlation is almost zero when incorporating the most recent data. The data did find weak negative correlations between recycling tonnage and waste tonnage for both calendar quarters and seasonal quarters; indicating a decrease in waste produced when more materials are recycled. The charts below illustrate the quarterly and seasonal quarterly data for waste, recycling, and organics. This focused on full quarters and seasonal quarters since the beginning of the LRS contract.



At the request of Co-Chair Charrette, the below data compiled reflects the annual waste, recycling, and organics tonnage collected by Village contracted waste haulers. This chart reflects the information available, with data going back to 2007. Data was not able to be located for 2021 or the first 3 months of 2022. The 2025 data is also only reflected through 9 months. The organics only reflects yard waste and curbside composting collection; staff are working to collect more data on other organics collections, such as fall leaf collection and the annual pumpkin smash. The second chart below illustrates the growth in subscribers to the Curbside Composting program since its launch in 2015. These are annual numbers prior to 2022 and the highest monthly total for each year beginning in 2022.



VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST



Collection Period	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	YTD TOTAL	AVG/MTH
Active Customers	2732	2731	2735	2738	2738	2739	2738	2739	2737				24627.00	2736.33
Compost Subscribers	540	540	545	543	544	548	552	553	556				4,921.00	547
Recycling Tons	73.09	51.70	61.49	70.44	71.25	54.36	65.06	63.07	55.13				565.59	62.84
Recycling lbs	146180	103400	122980	103400	122980	140880	142500	108720	130120				1121160	124573
2025 Recy lbs/Cust	53.51	37.86	44.97	37.86	44.97	37.76	44.92	51.43	52.05				405.32	45.04
Organics Tons	9.96	8.11	10.00	31.01	42.17	36.95	44.59	33.53	37.37				253.69	28.19
Organics lbs	19920	16220	20000	62020	84340	73900	89180	67060	74740				507380	56375
2025 Organics lbs/Cust	7.29	5.94	7.31	5.94	7.31	22.65	30.80	26.98	32.57				146.80	16.31
2025 Recycle & Organics Diversion %	32.39%	27.56%	28.28%	27.56%	28.28%	46.74%	44.86%	29.95%	39.94%				305.55%	33.95%
Trash Tons	173.35	157.24	181.33	203.44	161.11	195.76	213.28	167.38	182.31				1,635.20	181.69
Trash lbs	346700	314480	362660	314480	362660	406880	322220	391520	426560				3248160	360907
2025 Trash lbs/Cust	126.90	115.15	132.60	115.15	132.60	114.86	132.45	148.55	117.68				1,135.95	126.22
Total Tons	256.40	217.05	252.82	217.05	252.82	304.89	274.53	287.07	322.93				2,385.56	2655.06
Total lbs	512800	434100	505640	434100	505640	479900	569980	621660	553900				4617720	513080
2025 Total lbs/Cust	187.70	158.95	184.88	158.95	184.88	158.55	184.67	175.21	208.17				1,601.97	178
2025 White Goods Count	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0				2	0.22
2025 Stickers Sold	0	0	1,500	6,000	3,000	2,500	2,000	1,500	1,500				18,000	2,000
2025 E-WASTE Event Tons	0	0	1.5	0	0	0	0	0	1.47				2.97	0.33
2025 E-Waste Participation	0	0	23	0	0	0	0	0	36				59	6.55
2025 HHW Event Tons	0	0	0	0	0	0.479	0	0	0				0.479	0.0532

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 (6201 W. Canal Bank Road - Forest View, IL 60402)
RECYCLING PURCHASED BY	RESOURCED TO VARIOUS DOMESTIC BUYERS
Trash Facility	LRS MAYWOOD TRANSFER STATION (1201 Greenwood Ave, Maywood, IL 60153)