

Madison Street Development Newsletter

A Message from Village Trustee Lisa Gillis

This week's Madison Street Development newsletter features a piece from Trustee Lisa Gillis on the Village's long-term goal of sustainable living community.

We encourage residents to visit vrf.us/Madison to review the concept, timeline, submit public comments and read the FAQs (accessible by clicking the blue button marked "Read the Updated FAQ").

Sustainable Living in River Forest

As River Forest looks to the future, we will continue to focus on investing in projects that support our long-term goal of a sustainable, walkable, and transportation-oriented community.

The current proposed development at Madison and Ashland reflects these goals. Located along an existing commercial corridor, building residents will be within walking distance of restaurants, shopping, entertainment, everyday amenities, and multiple transit options, including Pace, CTA and Metra. We know Village of River Forest residents already use many alternative transit options. Per the 2023 Census data update, over 25% of residents walk, bike, and/or take transit to work, with commuters taking transit at a higher rate in River Forest than in Cook County and the larger Chicagoland area. Investing in developments already connected to existing transportation options is an important additional step towards building a community that relies less on cars for commuting and daily activities, reinforcing sustainability as a priority for all of us in River Forest.

Madison Street provides a rare opportunity to plan for a bright future by doubling down on sustainability. It is important to note that the project site got a score of 91 out of 100 on [Walk Score](#), a website that evaluates an address's walkability! A Walk Score of 91 means that the location is a "Walkers Paradise." In this type of neighborhood, residents can accomplish most of their daily errands and activities such as shopping, visiting the bank, going for coffee and dining out without relying on a car.

In addition, communities across the region are increasingly recognizing the importance of expanding housing options, especially adding high-quality rental options, while planning responsibly for a more sustainable future for residents and businesses. As noted in the last Village newsletter, rental units account for only 11% percent of the total housing mix in River Forest, and the majority of those rental units have been part of the community for quite a long time. The new Madison Street rental units would bring the proportion of rental units in the Village housing mix to 12.2%, representing a 15% increase.

Thoughtful developments that maximize the use of existing transit infrastructure, support local businesses, and strengthen commercial corridors are an important part of responsible community planning. Investments like these will help River Forest remain vibrant, accessible, and economically strong for generations to come. And importantly, they are aligned with our Village's long-term goals.

Thank you,
Trustee Lisa Gillis

Additional topics will be discussed in future Madison Street Development newsletters. If you have any questions or want to provide feedback, please visit vrf.us/Madison.



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