

RIVER FOREST

Proud Heritage • Bright Future

The Village of River Forest Newsletter | January, 2023



Excited for 2023

The new year is a time for reflection and resolutions to achieve goals and focus on our priorities.

The Village accomplished a lot in 2022, as highlighted in our [December newsletter](#).

Among the 2022 highlights were the implementation of modernized **water infrastructure**, adoption of a 'best-in-class' **ethics ordinance**, creation of the Cross Community Climate Collaborative and recognition of the Village as a **SolSmart** Silver community. These accomplishments, along with continued awards for fiscal reporting and responsibility are a strong foundation for continued success in 2023.

We are also excited to announce several exciting projects in the works for 2023. These include:

1. The **Age Friendly Advisory Ad Hoc Committee** which is near to completion of its Age-Friendly report for the AARP endorsement.
2. Demolition of the Village-owned properties in the **Madison Street Tax Increment Financing District** to attract economic development, funded by a \$350,000

grant from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity.

3. Village planning consultant is moving forward on the North Avenue and Madison Street Corridor redevelopment plan.
4. The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Consultant continues to analyze Village processes and procedures.
5. Construction of five green alleys as part of the Village's **Alley Improvement Program**.
6. Completion of the Village Wide **Traffic Study**.
7. A \$90,000 grant for the **Green Infrastructure Partnership Grant** from the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago for green alley reconstruction, which will help to mitigate storm water impact on nearby properties.
8. Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity Grant for the Harlem Avenue Bridge/ Viaduct funded \$245,000 for Phase I Engineering.
9. The **Rebuild Illinois Grant** will fund more than \$730,000 in infrastructure improvements.
10. The official launch of the Metropolitan Mayor's Caucus Electric Vehicle Readiness Cohort.

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From Village President Cathy Adduci

Dear River Forest residents,

I wish all of our residents and the Village a prosperous 2023! Throughout the month of January, the Village Board of Trustees and I will be reviewing the Capital Improvement Plan draft. This important document is reviewed each year and plans capital expenditures for the next five years, which includes improvements to our government assets, the purchase of police and fire vehicles, public works equipment and more. Our annual budget is traditionally released in the spring of each year and this is the first step in the budget completion process.

The River Forest Police Department will be hosting a presentation on the Illinois SAFE-T Act (Safety, Accountability, Fairness and Equity - Today) at the Village Board meeting on January 9 at 7pm. There are a lot of questions, uncertainty and controversy regarding what is entailed in this bill. Police department staff will provide clarification on what is encompassed in these new laws and I encourage all residents to attend. For those that cannot, a summary of information shared will be communicated through the Village's Enewsletter and social media channels.

Finally, since we are entering the coldest months of the year, the Salvation Army is currently collecting new and gently used coats through Wednesday, February 15. Coats can be dropped off at any Jewel location, including the one located in River Forest. The Salvation Army is also asking residents in need of a winter coat to please contact them at 708-848-1181.

Sincerely,

Cathy Adduci
Cathy Adduci, Village President
Village of River Forest



Village Board Trustees



Erika Bachner



Kathleen Brennan



Lisa Gillis



Ken Johnson



Robert O'Connell



Respicio F. Vazquez

Village Clerk



Jonathan Keller

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



News Around Town



Announcing the Winter 2023 Session: In-Person!

River Forest Township Winter Sibshops Program Starts January 7

Sibshops is a program specially designed for siblings of children with special needs, disabilities, and mental/physical health challenges. Siblings have FUN while sharing experiences with each other and specially trained facilitators. Sibshops are meeting IN-PERSON at Thrive Counseling Center, 120 S. Marion Street in Oak Park on the following Saturdays: 1/7, 1/14, 1/21, 1/28, 2/4, 2/11, 2/25 from 11:30 a.m. -1:30 p.m. Residents can choose the dates they would like to attend and lunch is provided. The cost is \$10/session; \$60 for seven sessions and scholarships are available and funded by River Forest Township. Advanced registration is required. For more information, or to register, visit thrivecc.org/services/group-services/ or email Amber Jackson at sibshops@thrivecc.org.

José Cruz joins River Forest Public Library

José has been providing exceptional library services to children throughout his 10 years of library experience. Most recently, he was a Children's Librarian at Oak Park Public Library, where he was well-known for his outstanding story times and commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, as well as his innovative programs designed to engage young audiences. The Library is thrilled that José will be bringing his creativity and enthusiasm to community members.

José is replacing Dannie Moore, who left to pursue an opportunity with the Chicago Public Library system, and will be reporting to Melaina Maraldi, Manager of Children's Services. Melaina shared her excitement about José joining her team, saying, "he already knows our community well, so he'll be a familiar face to many, and we know our patrons will appreciate attending his legendary story times." She went on to say that Jose's knowledge of library trends, his creative programming and collaborative spirit, align with the values and culture of our Library, making him the perfect fit for the position.

In his new role at River Forest Public Library, José will be managing various Children's print and digital collections and implementing engaging programs for the youngest audiences (from birth through 4th grade), both in the building and out in the community. You will often find José at the Children's Services desk at the Library, where he will be providing reference and readers' advisory services. José's first day will be on Monday, January 9. Please join the Library in welcoming José to our library team.



Village Department News

Police Department

Snow Parking

As a reminder, parking is not permitted on any Village street after two inches of snow or more has accumulated - and for up to eight hours after the snowfall ends to allow snow plows to safely clear the streets, as well as emergency vehicles that are responding to an incident or call for paramedics. Thank you for your assistance in helping the Village keep our community members and our roads safe!

Fire Department

Holiday Tree Disposal

Due to the past years of challenges related to the pandemic, many residents have looked to extend some holiday cheer by putting up decorations early and leaving them up longer than in the past. This includes Christmas trees that have popped up sometimes as early as mid-November. If you have an artificial tree this shouldn't be a problem. However, if you have a real tree, the chance of it being extremely dry at this time is high - which increases the risk of home fires. The longer a tree has been cut, the greater it is a fire hazard, and tree sap is particularly volatile and flammable. Even if you've kept it watered, trees will naturally dry out, and its needles provide a large surface area that can burn. These factors cause trees to burn very quickly, and very hot. A tree can be fully consumed by fire in as little as 45 seconds, and the high heat and flash can ignite walls and furniture just as quickly. Additionally, a dry tree can burn three to four times faster than a watered tree. It is best to remove your tree from your home now if it is still up and recycle it.

You can recycle trees by placing them at the curb every Tuesday throughout the month of January - and your tree should look something like this! Please take off any/all decorations before placing them at the curb. Wreaths can also be recycled, but only if the branches are removed from the wire frame. Do not put wreaths that have a wire frame out with your tree, as the wire can not be recycled. Please instead place wire framed wreaths in your trash.



Updated Illinois Smoke Alarm Law

Since 1988, all homes and buildings in Illinois have been required to have smoke alarms. Beginning January 1 of this year, a new law went into effect requiring all homes to install new smoke alarms with a 10-year sealed battery. This means the smoke alarm will have a lithium battery with a 10-year life span, so there is no need to replace the battery during the life of the alarm. For more information, [click here](#).



CPR Saves Lives

IT'S A FACT: CPR does save lives! According to The American Heart Association, more than 350,000 people suffer out-of-hospital sudden cardiac arrest each year in the United States. Sadly, fewer than 10% of those individuals survive. The survival rate improves to 29% for those that receive immediate CPR and are admitted to a hospital.



Automatic External Defibrillators (AED's) have helped improve survival rates in public places such as churches, restaurants and airports. Statistics show that if more people know CPR, more lives can be saved.

What happens when you stop breathing?

- After only 4 minutes: permanent brain damage sets in
- After 8-10 minutes: Brain Death can occur

The Fire Department, in conjunction with The American Heart Association (AHA) offers CPR/AED classes to the public as well as private and professional groups. Courses are conducted by certified instructors in accordance with curriculum and guidelines set forth by the AHA. For more information on CPR/AED classes please call Firefighter/Paramedic Paul Zipperich at 708-366-7629.

Every Second Counts. Be the Difference. Save a Life.

Village Department News

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Public Works

Snow Removal Restrictions

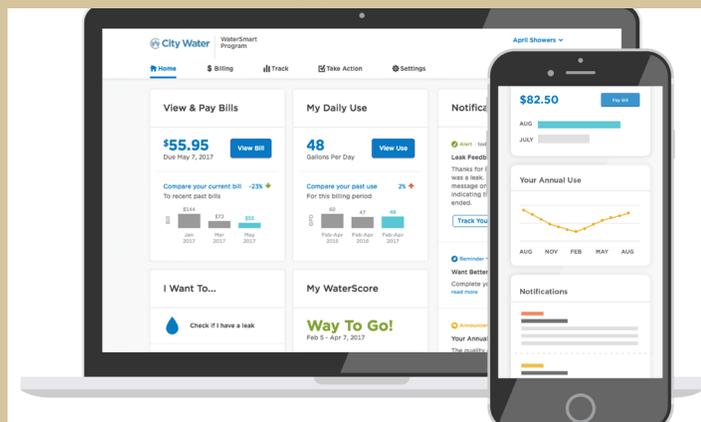
When snowfall occurs, the Public Works Department would like to remind you that Village code requires residents and business owners to remove snow and ice from sidewalks in front of, and adjacent to their property, within 24 hours after a snow event.

Snow or ice frozen on sidewalks that cannot be removed without injury to the pavement should be treated with an abrasive material until weather permits further clean-up. Snow removal contractors are prohibited from using snow blowers between the hours of 1 a.m. and 5 a.m. Additionally, the placement of snow or ice on any Village owned street, alley or sidewalk is prohibited.

Updated Building Code Now in Place

In an effort to update the Village's current Building Code, the President and Board of Trustees approved the adoption of the 2018 International Code Council series. This includes the International Building Code (IBC), International Residential Code (IRC), International Mechanical Code (IMC), International Fire Code (IFC), as well as other ICC codes. Additionally, the Village has adopted the 2017 National Electric Code (NEC). These new codes took effect January 1 and may mean that some projects will require changes in construction means and methods to meet the new requirements. Further details on the specific updates can be found [here](#).

To submit a permit for construction, please visit the River Forest building permit portal at <https://riverforest.onlama.com> and click on the "Apply" button. The next page includes links specific to the type of work planned. You can also narrow the field down by using the "Filter by keyword" function in the upper right-hand corner, or through the links at the top of the page. Helpful videos are also available by scrolling to the bottom of the page and clicking the link for "Online Help". Once your permit and plans are received, they will be reviewed by Village staff for code compliance. Please contact staff at 708-714-3552 for any questions.



WaterSmart

Join more than 400 of your neighbors that have already joined WaterSmart. This is the Village's online portal that makes it easy to access a number of services without ever leaving your home! You can pay utility bills online - including your water bill, thanks to the new WaterSmart Portal. Applications for building permits, service requests, commuter parking payments and more can also be accessed online! To see the full range of online services, click [here](#).

River Forest Sustainability

Compost Your Holiday Greens

Holiday greens such as live Christmas trees, wreaths and garland will be collected on the following dates: January 10, 17, 24, and 31. Holiday greens must be placed curbside prior to 7 a.m. on these days. Please remove all lights, tinsel, ornaments, metal hangers, plastic material and stands prior to placing at the curb for pick-up as these materials will prevent the items from being properly composted. Please note - this collection does not include any other leaves or yard waste items.



Recycle Your Holiday Lights

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

ACCEPTED ITEMS: Wire string holiday lights and extension cords. Mini-lights (or Italian lights), C7 lights, C9 lights, rope lights, LED lights and extension cords. All colors and lengths will be accepted.

ITEMS NOT ACCEPTED: Live trees, artificial trees, live greens, wreaths, garland, ornaments, figurines, inflatables, lawn ornaments, or other holiday decorations.



Organizations Serving River Forest



Township

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

From the Township Assessor...

Happy New Year! 2023 is a triennial reassessment year for the residents of River Forest Township. As of this writing, the Assessor has not been notified as to when reassessment notices will be mailed to residents. Taxpayers will receive the reassessment notice directly from the Cook County Assessor's Office. Receipt of this notice will indicate that River Forest Township will be open for property assessment appeals with the Cook County Assessor for 30 days. Residents may contact the office by email: assessor@riverforesttownship.org or by calling 708-366-2787 for assistance with the appeal process.

Stay informed regarding your property taxes. Sign up for our notifications. [Sign up today!](#)

New CAPABLE Program Is Now a Part of the Senior Home Repair Program

The CAPABLE Program is a new feature of the Senior Home Repair Program, available to Oak Park and River Forest residents aged 62+ through township senior services of Oak Park and River Forest, and the North West Housing Partnership. A nurse and occupational therapist (OT) will join the handyman for a home visit, do a home safety assessment, and make a plan to strengthen the safety in a senior citizen's home. Nurse and OT services available through the CAPABLE program are offered at no cost. For more information, or to make an appointment, contact Paula Bush at 847-969-0561 or email paulabush@nwph.net



LOSS support group now meeting in-person, 3rd Mondays

A monthly support group is re-starting monthly in-person for adults (18+) who are suffering the loss of a loved one due to suicide. The group is run by LOSS (Loving Outreach to Survivors of Suicide) and is led by a licensed clinical social worker. LOSS is a non-denominational program offered through Catholic Charities.

LOSS meets on the third Monday of each month, from 6 - 8 p.m., at River Forest Township, 8020 Madison Street in River Forest. The next meeting is January 16.

All are welcome to attend. Please call 312-655-7283 or visit catholiccharities.net/loss for more information or to register.

riverforesttownship.org - 708-366-2029 x11

Park District

View the Winter Fun Guide online

All the programs and events the park district has to offer is available online. [Click here](#) to view the Winter Fun Guide.



rfparks.com | 708-366-6660

Library

Visit the [library website](#) to see everything happening at your library. There's something for everyone at theLibrary!

Upcoming Events

For Kids and Teens:

- Cartooning class, Robots: Thursday, 1/12, 3:30-4:30 p.m., Grades K-8, **Advanced registration required.**

For Adults:

- Meditation Soundbath - Saturday, 1/14, 2-3 p.m., **Advanced registration required**
- True Crime: Tales from the Edgewater Hospital - Sunday, 1/15, 2-3:30 p.m.
- Adult Coloring Club - Monday, 1/16, 11 a.m.-12 p.m.

riverforestlibrary.org | 708-366-5205

Organizations Serving River Forest



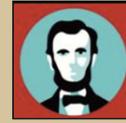
Oak Park and River Forest High School



Roosevelt Middle School



Willard Elementary School



Lincoln Elementary School

District 200

OPRF High School Scholarship

Did you know there are more than 70 college scholarship opportunities available for graduating seniors through the Oak Park and River Forest High School Scholarship Foundation? The application process will open this Friday, January 6, starting at 9 a.m. The scholarships are available in a wide range of areas, and more than half of these scholarships do not require financial need. To learn more, visit: [this page](#).

Purchase Digital Tickets to Athletic Events

Visit the OPRFHS GoFan page [here](#).

OPRFHS student tickets are free to all home games with a valid physical school ID.

All major credit cards are accepted, along with Apple Pay and Google Pay. Note: No cash sales.



Registration is now open!

Registration is now open for ExcelEdge Test prep classes. These classes are for juniors planning to take the SAT or ACT.

What? SAT 1600, a 7-week program for the April 12th SAT ACT 36, an 8-week program for the April 15th ACT

When? SAT 1600: Thursdays, 4-6pm or 6:30-8:30pm, February 2-March 16 ACT 36: Saturdays, 10am-noon, January 28-March 18

Who? All college-bound juniors

Where? Oak Park-River Forest High School

Why? SAT 1600 and ACT 36 are proven systems that work. SAT 1600 and ACT 36 sharpen students' essential skills and test smarts. SAT 1600 and ACT 36 can give you the edge as you apply to colleges and universities.

Cost? \$325 for SAT 1600 and \$350 for ACT 36

How? To join the program, please register online at OP-RF: <https://oprfrhs.revtrak.net/> or through our website: www.exceledegeinc.com. Registration is now open and closes on January 13 or once sections are filled.

oprfrhs.org | 708-383-0700

District 90



District 90 Students Return to School

With the start of the New Year, District 90 students will return to school from Winter Break on Thursday, January 5. Please be sure to drive carefully and watch for students and other pedestrians throughout the Village as our young people travel to and from school.

Committee of the Whole and Board of Education Meetings Scheduled

District 90 will hold the Board of Education's Committee of the Whole (COW) meeting on Tuesday, January 10, starting at 7 p.m. The COW meeting will be held in person in the auditorium at Roosevelt Middle School, 7560 Oak Avenue in River Forest. The meeting will also be available virtually on Zoom. Guests can view the COW meeting proceedings via Zoom by clicking this link: <https://district90-org.zoom.us/j/88594056964>

The regular Board of Education meeting will take place on Monday, January 23, starting at 7 p.m. Like the Committee of the Whole meeting, the Board meeting will be held in person at Roosevelt Middle School and virtually via Zoom. The Zoom link for the regular Board meeting is: <https://district90-org.zoom.us/j/84812102749>

Non-Attendance Days in January

Non-attendance days for District 90 in January will include Friday, January 13, in order for teachers to participate in professional development during an Institute Day. The entire District – schools and Administration Office – will also be closed Monday, January 16, for the Dr. Martin Luther King holiday.

district90.org | 708-771-8282

Excited for 2023

- 11. Completion of the Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Study
- 12. Phase 1 engineering design for the **North Avenue Streetscape** improvements, through a partnership with the Village of Elmwood Park.
- 13. Planning for a **GreenTown Event** in June at Triton College in partnership with the communities of Broadview, Maywood and Oak Park.
- 14. Advances on the goals of the **Cross Community Climate Collaborative (C4)** funded by a \$125,000 grant from the U.S. Conference of Mayors'

Do you need help from the Village? Visit the Village website and submit a service request!



Service requests

ExcelEdge Test Prep

SAT 1600 and ACT 36

7- and 8-week programs for the April 12 SAT and the April 15 ACT

For OPRFHS college-bound juniors



Follow the Village on Social Media



Sign Up For Email and Alerts



River Forest Events



Village Contact Information

Village Administration
708-714-3520

Village Administrator
Brian Murphy

Finance Department
708-714-3524

Director Rosemary McAdams

Fire Department
708-714-3560

Chief Tom Gaertner

Public Works and Development Services
708-714-3551

Director Jeff Loster

Police Department
708-714-3540

Chief James O'Shea

Emergency Services
Dial 911

400 Park Avenue River Forest, IL 60305

708-366-8500

708-366-3702 (fax)

Monday 8 a.m. – 7 p.m.

Tuesday- Friday 8a.m. – 4:30 p.m.