



ALL GOOD THINGS CLOSE TO HOME



OAK FOREST SPRINGS INTO CONSTRUCTION SEASON

It's spring! And, you know what that means — it's construction season. Next month, three projects will kick into high gear — the city's annual Road Program, improvements to the Cicero Avenue Streetscape, and phase one of a multi-year construction project at Oak Forest High School.

Road Program

Each year, the Public Works Department evaluates city streets and ranks them based on the severity of needed repairs. The budgeted amount is then used to determine the number of streets the city can pave.

This year's Road Program includes: Linden Avenue from Maple Drive to Forestview Drive; Laramie Avenue from 147th Street to 148th Street; 163rd Street from Long Avenue to Central Avenue; Forest Trail from Lockwood Avenue to the cul-de-sac; and Lisa Lane from Willowick Drive to Craig Drive. The north exit of the Avenues and the north end of Grove Avenue will be included if funding is available.

Cicero Avenue Streetscape

Picking up where it left off, the city will continue the Cicero Avenue Streetscape improvements from 151st Street to 155th Street. The work will include street light replacement, new sidewalk and stamped concrete, driveway consolidation, benches, and planter boxes. The \$2,167,619 project will be funded by the Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program, Surface Transportation Program and the city, which will contribute \$300,000.

Also on Cicero Avenue, Public Works will continue to replace old street light fixtures with energy efficient lights from 149th Street to 159th Street. The new LED lighting will greatly enhance nighttime visibility and reduce energy usage by 75 percent. In addition, Public Works will change out fixtures on 159th Street from Cicero Avenue to Central Avenue, in several

residential areas, and the Arbor Park commuter lot. The \$109,800 project will be funded by Public Sector Energy Efficiency grants.



BHSD 228 is installing the latest synthetic turf system, the Brock ShockPad/14 layer, at its high schools because it is a longer-lasting surface and safer for students.

Oak Forest High School

Phase one of Bremen High School District's \$50 million Quality School Construction Bond (QSCB) project is underway at Oak Forest High School with the installation of one of the safest synthetic turf field designs on the market.

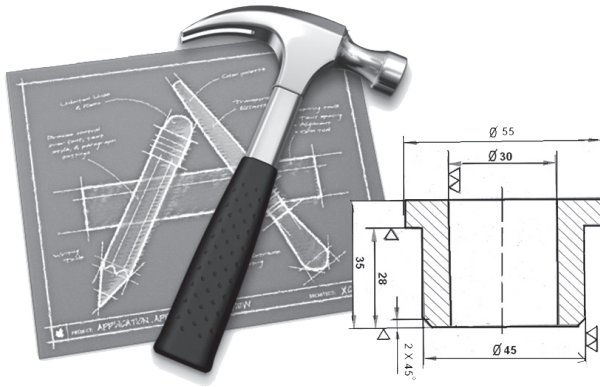
Crews will be installing concrete curbs, light pole bases, goal post footings, and the artificial turf. After that, they will install new tennis courts, permanent fencing, athletic equipment, and field lighting posts and fixtures. Lastly, they will repair the landscaping.

Next year, projects will include a new gym floor, field house, fitness center, training rooms, classrooms, storage space, digital signage, and a cafeteria makeover.

The district was one of only 29 districts out of 193 applicants in Illinois to qualify for the QSCB grant, and one of only three districts in Cook County to receive the maximum amount. The annual burden to taxpayers for the district's portion of their tax bills is likely to decrease by approximately \$5 million as a result of the grant.

Do I Need a Building Permit?

As spring approaches, the Building Department has been receiving calls from homeowners and contractors who are anxious to get started on home improvement projects. Here are some helpful hints while planning your spring projects.



Do I Need a Building Permit?

Examples of projects that require a permit include:

- 🌿 Roof replacement
- 🌿 Furnace or air conditioner replacement
- 🌿 Window or patio door replacement or addition
- 🌿 Above or in-ground pool or hot tub
- 🌿 Fence (replacement or new)
- 🌿 Sheds
- 🌿 Decks
- 🌿 Concrete, asphalt or brick pavers
- 🌿 Sewer repair
- 🌿 Electrical or plumbing work
- 🌿 Lawn sprinklers
- 🌿 Detached garage
- 🌿 Remodel (depending on scope of work)
- 🌿 Temporary or permanent signs (businesses)
- 🌿 Masonry mailbox

Inspections

On-site inspections will be required to confirm that the work is being done properly. Please note that



some permits require multiple inspections (e.g., roof deck inspection before roof is covered with shingles, and pre-pour inspections for concrete or asphalt work).

You will be informed of the required inspections when the permit is issued. Roofs must be completed Monday through Friday to ensure an inspection.

Contractors

Any contractor working on your property must be registered with the Building Department. To ensure that your contractor is registered and that there are no related complaints, call the Building Department at 708-687-4050, ext. 1040 to confirm this before signing a contract.



Adhere to Construction Hours

Per city ordinance, no one may conduct property maintenance work, including landscaping, which creates noise between the hours of 10 p.m. and 7 a.m.

Contact the Building Department

The best way to verify if you need a permit is to call us at 708-687-4050, ext. 1040. We will be happy to talk to you about safety, local building codes, and currently licensed contractors. Remember to visit our section of the city's website at www.oak-forest.org for construction guides, permit applications, and other helpful information!

Don't PASS Up This Fire Safety Reminder



Pull
Aim
Squeeze
Sweep



from the MAYOR

Community development is a term used in local government. Generally, people think it only involves bricks and mortar, such as building new houses and apartments, streets and sidewalks, sewers and commercial buildings. Community development is more than that to me: It is improving Oak Forest's physical, social and economic environment. Moreover, successful community development means planning for improvements, initiating their implementation, inspecting and reviewing them over time, and then assuming the responsibility to oversee their continued success.

As an example, it was Oak Forest's community development efforts that greatly improved the city's fortunes since the Great Recession of 2008 — when so many communities across America, including Oak Forest, suffered the adverse effects of this economic catastrophe. During this time, residents suffered the loss of jobs and businesses closed, foreclosures of homes and businesses reduced revenue owed to the city, employees were laid off, open positions were not filled, wages were

frozen, the city's surplus (emergency) funds dwindled and union contracts required renegotiation.

Over the last eight years, Oak Forest struggled as most communities did, but has regained a firm financial footing. It has been through the efforts of dedicated city employees, a very cooperative City Council and an involved citizenry that we have managed to achieve what we have today — a healthy budget, sustainable city services, outstanding youth sports programs, a renewed sense of community, and more commercial activity in Oak Forest. Indeed, this is community development at its best.

In order to build upon this progress, the city has recently hired a new economic and community development director, whose primary job will be to assist our business community and bring new retail investment into town. Travis Bandstra, formerly the economic development director in Lansing, Illinois, will work with other professional staff to further improve Oak Forest's image and financial position. Our on-going marketing and economic development effort

will only be considered successful when new investment and retail sales taxes actually relieve some of the property tax burden faced by residents and businesses while new retail development brings more shopping convenience to all of us.

The City of Oak Forest will continue to encourage positive efforts to improve our community's physical, social and economic well-being, our quality of life and the value of our property. The City Council and I believe in working as a team and in taking a holistic approach toward improving all aspects of life in Oak Forest. We are encouraged to have a new team member in Mr. Bandstra, who will focus on business retention and attraction. We are confident this will lead to other improvements vital to our community.

Toward that end, elected officials will continue to develop policies that work in our town. Our fine staff will continue to serve each and every resident as best they can. I thank each of them, as well as our many volunteers, who have served on boards, commissions and local organizations — they have been so important to our community. If you have any questions or concerns, please call the Mayor's Office at 708-687-4050, ext. 1005. Together, we can make Oak Forest an even better place to live and raise our families.

Henry L. Kuspa, Mayor

June 2 & June 3
8 AM to 3 PM
Register at www.oak-forest.org

citywide garage sale

OAK FOREST



Laura Clemons
1st Ward Alderman
708-903-1845

Our city comes alive with warmer weather. One of the most popular spring and summer events — the Citywide Garage Sale — is Friday, June 2 and Saturday, June 3 from 8 a.m.

to 3 p.m. To register, visit www.oak-forest.org. Savers Thrift Store will be at the CVS parking lot and Arbor Park Middle School parking lot on June 3 to collect unsold items. Also, you can recycle your electronics on April 22 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at City Hall. There is a fee for televisions and computer monitors, but all other electronics are free.

Also synonymous with warmer weather is construction. This year's Road Program includes two streets in our ward: Lisa Lane from Willowick to Craig Street and the Forest Trail cul-de-sac off Lockwood Avenue. Fortunately, many of our streets have been resurfaced over the past 10 years.

Warm weather means shorts and swimsuits so I've already signed up at the brand new Anytime Fitness located at 159th and Central Avenue. The facility is incredible! Please support our new local business. A community that is active together, stays healthy together! If outdoor activity is more your style, the Forest Preserve's Heritage Corridor Trail is a gorgeous place to take a walk, run or bike ride.

Please remember that it is against ordinance to park your car across the sidewalk between 7 a.m. and 10 p.m. This is a big safety concern for our children. Please be considerate of your neighbors and do not block the public way.



Diane Wolf
3rd Ward Alderman
708-207-8392

While residents are recycling their electronics and paper this month, the Street Art Commission is recycling bikes. Yep, that's right, bikes! And, we're turning them into works

of art. With the help of City Clerk Dave Neuman, I am giving away 30 bikes to interested artists who will transform them and display them throughout the city's commercial corridors.

The bikes were turned over to the city by the Oak Forest Police Department last month. Annually, the police department must dispose of lost or stolen bikes that go unclaimed. I requested 30 of these bikes to use as this year's municipal art project, which we are calling "Bike Whatcha Like."

Interested artists need to request a bike no later than Friday, May 12. The bikes will be distributed on a first come, first served basis. To request a bike, simply give me a call at 708-207-8392. Bikes will be available for pickup at City Hall on Saturday, May 20 between 9 a.m. and noon.

Decorated bikes must be returned to City Hall the week of June 19. Public Works will securely place the bikes in front of businesses and in public spaces across town. Our goal is to have them up in time for Oak Fest so that as many people as possible can enjoy them.

I hope you are as excited as I am to see how our local artists recycle these modes of transportation into works of art. The sky truly is the limit! Please watch the city's website, e-Briefs and social media for updates.



Paul Selman
4th Ward Alderman
708-687-4050, x1013

As the newly elected 4th Ward alderman, I'd like to introduce myself to those who may not know me.

My lovely bride of 26 years, Kitty, is originally from Chicago, so we moved back to the area in 1998 after I studied mechanical engineering at Georgia Tech. Prior to returning to college, I served six years in the United States Navy where I was deployed in support of Operation Desert Storm.

Kitty and I have been blessed with many things, among them two healthy children. Ed, a high school senior, is busy with the college selection process. Kate is a fourth grader, who enjoys sports and science.

I am an engineering merit badge councilor and assistant scoutmaster for Boy Scout Troop 385. I am proud to say that my son will soon advance to the rank of Eagle Scout. I also serve as a lector and Eucharistic minister at Saint Damian Church.

I have already had the pleasure of working with Mayor Kuspa, the aldermen and staff as a member of the Oak Forest Veterans Commission. I have helped with the commission's flag and the flag repository. If you are a veteran, please reach out to the commission at ofveteranscomm@oak-forest.org.

I look forward to helping 4th Ward residents remember that *All Good Things are Close to Home* in Oak Forest.

Feel free to contact me at 708-687-4050, ext. 1013 or pselman@oak-forest.org.



Jim Emmett
5th Ward Alderman
708-705-6895

Congratulations to Officer Jason Vodnik, who received the James P. Morrissy Award last month at the awards ceremony for police and fire personnel. The award

honors the memory of Officer Jim Morrissy, who died in the line of duty on March 17, 2014. According to Sergeant Tom Lynch, who nominated Vodnik, "Jason is a consistent, well-rounded patrolman with a vast knowledge of the law. Above all, Jason is a team player and wants what is best for Oak Forest." Thank you, Jason.

Fire Secretary Lisa Alfaro also was recognized at the awards ceremony for her endless commitment to the fire department over the past 17 years. Recently, Lisa obtained a \$318,000 grant to purchase much needed air-packs and turn out gear for the department. Through her expert writing and organizational skills the department has received nearly \$1 million in grant money to date — saving millions of taxpayer dollars. Thank you, Lisa.

And, firefighters Mike Campnell, Steve Urban, Kurt DeGroot, Matt Wienke, and Trevor Proszek were honored for their service in response to a motorcycle accident on I-57 and I-80. If not for their quick, efficient response to a patient with critical wounds, this patient may not have survived. Thank you, crew.

Jason, Lisa and the men of Engine 12 and Ambulance 12 are just a few shining examples of our police and fire department. Thank you to each and every officer, firefighter and staff member. We appreciate all that you do.



James Hortsman
6th Ward Alderman
708-687-5307

We have just come through the April 4 General Election, which decided many seats on the City Council as well as the mayor and city clerk seats. Many other positions

were decided in this election too, including school board members, library board members and park district board members. I look forward to serving all of you for another four years.

The spring season is a great opportunity to get out of the house to enjoy the outdoors. The city will be starting more outdoor projects, such as the Road Program. There are also many upcoming city events to enjoy like the Citywide Garage Sale, Electronics Recycling Event and Oak Forest Relay for Life.

At this time of year, you also will see the police department's traffic trailer in various spots in town. The trailer helps concentrate efforts to monitor traffic patterns on city streets, and check that we utilize our city resources appropriately to keep our residents safe. Remember, if you see any strange or suspicious activity, please call the police.

Finally, remember that our children will be outside more now that the weather is getting nicer. We need to be diligent as many of our children walk or bike in our area.

I know it is time to work hard in our ward and in the city as a whole. If there are specific issues you are passionate about or need help with, please call or email me at hortsman6thward@gmail.com. I look forward to hearing from you.



Denise Danihel
7th Ward Alderman
708-535-0911

Thank you to the Green Steps Commission for celebrating Earth Day on April 22 with an electronics recycling event from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at City Hall. This is the perfect

opportunity for residents to do a little spring cleaning and properly dispose of televisions, computers, tablets, and more. Although most electronics are free to recycle at the Earth Day collection event, there is a charge for televisions and computer monitors. I know many residents balk at the idea of having to pay to recycle these items, but our hands are tied until the state legislature makes some changes to the law that was enacted in 2012 to keep electronics out of landfills.

Homewood Disposal can no longer accept electronics at the curbside. But, you can schedule a pickup for \$25 for most electronics at www.mydisposal.com/residential/ewasteform. You will have to pay an extra \$25 for televisions and computer monitors. Once scheduled, you can place the items curbside near your trash. Electronics that are placed curbside without a scheduled pick up will not be removed.

Unfortunately, the cost of recycling electronics has escalated due to complexities in the state law regarding manufacturers' responsibilities, recyclers' processing costs, and also commodity market conditions. For televisions and computer monitors, the only option seems to be to pay the fee or be patient while environmental groups, manufacturers, retailers, and municipal collectors work to change the current legislation.

Spring Reminders from the Public Works Department

Yard waste pickup resumes

Grass clippings, leaves and branches should be placed in brown yard waste bags, 32-gallon cans with red "Yard Waste Only" stickers (free at City Hall) or a 95-gallon cart (free from Homewood Disposal Service).



Clean Up Week

Residents of single-family homes may dispose of multiple bulk items during Clean Up Week, April 24 through April 28. Simply leave unwanted household items (except electronics and hazardous materials) at the curb on your regular pickup day.

Public Works chipping crews will be following Homewood Disposal's pickup schedule. Please leave your branches at the curb by 7 a.m. on your pickup day. Branches must be less than four inches in diameter and four feet in length and stacked in piles no higher than three feet tall. Larger branches must be cut up into logs (no longer than 24 inches) and stacked in a separate pile at the curb. Stumps, root balls and roots must be free of attached dirt.

For more information, call Public Works at 708-535-4090 or visit Homewood Disposal's website at www.mydisposal.com/towns/oak-forest-garbage.

Arbor Day is April 28

And, don't forget about Arbor Day on April 28. The city will plant an Oak tree at Scarlet Oak School. You can make the most of Arbor Day at home, school and in the community by visiting www.arborday.org.



Water conservation begins May 15

Water conservation measures go into effect on Monday, May 15 until Friday, September 15. Outside water use is allowed from 7 to 11 a.m. and 7 to 11 p.m. on odd or even dates based on your property address.

If drought conditions occur or the Village of Oak Lawn's water distribution center encounters mechanical trouble, more stringent restrictions could be implemented.



OAK FOREST GREEN STEPS COMMISSION
ELECTRONICS RECYCLING
SATURDAY, APRIL 22 — 9AM TO 1PM
CITY HALL 15440 S. CENTRAL AVENUE



The Oak Forest Green Steps Commission is teaming up with VetTech.US to recycle electronics and support our veterans!

\$25 PER TV & COMPUTER MONITOR
\$45 PER TV 40" INCHES OR GREATER
\$50 TV HOME PICKUP; CALL 708-533-5464

ITEMS ACCEPTED AT NO CHARGE:

• Computers	• Stereos	• Video Game Consoles
• Keyboards	• CD/VCR/DVD Players	• Microwaves
• Cell Phones	• Fax Machines	• Computer mice
• MP3 Players	• PDAs	
• Printers		



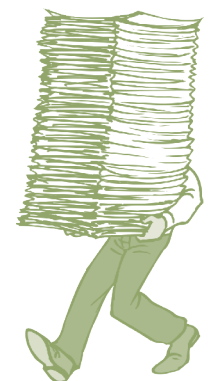

VetTech US, founded by Peter Polus, is a program of the Keeling Family Foundation dedicated to training and preparing veterans for the IT career field while simultaneously collecting and recycling/re-purposing E-waste.

Library Hosts Shred Event on April 29

The Friends of the Library will host a shred event at Acorn Public Library on Saturday, April 29 from 9 a.m. to noon. The Shred Authority's mobile shredding unit will be stationed in the lower-level parking lot at Albert Drive and Central Avenue.

In order to ensure everyone can get through the line, please do not bring more than two full boxes of items to shred. Acceptable items include:

- ✦ unbound papers (staples and paperclips are acceptable);
- ✦ credit cards;
- ✦ identification cards; and
- ✦ loose CDs, DVDs and Blu-ray discs.



For more details, contact Acorn Library at 708-687-3700 or visit www.acornlibrary.org.

City Hires Economic Development Director

The City of Oak Forest has hired Travis Bandstra as its economic and community development director.

“Travis has had a lot of success engaging business owners and cultivating a burgeoning downtown in a neighboring town,” said City Administrator Troy Ishler. “His willingness to try new ideas and streamline processes will be a strong asset for us.”



Travis Bandstra

Most recently, Bandstra served as the director of economic development for the Village of Lansing – enhancing its economic vitality through a retail recruitment strategy that attracted numerous new businesses. In addition to managing high profile economic development projects and redevelopment efforts, Bandstra supervised the public input and design process for a multi-million dollar public outdoor plaza. He also developed a comprehensive marketing plan for the village.

Earlier in his career, Bandstra served as the director of alumni relations at Trinity Christian College in Palos Heights. In this role, he developed relationships with alumni worldwide, improved communication between departments, solicited sponsorships and charitable gifts for institutional causes, and implemented several new initiatives to more effectively engage with alumni.

Bandstra earned a bachelor’s degree in political science and business from Trinity Christian College and a master’s of public policy and administration from Northwestern University. He currently is pursuing certification through the International Economic Development Council to become one of only 1,100 certified economic developers nationwide.

Anytime Fitness Opens

Anytime Fitness is now open in the Oak Forest Commons Shopping Center at 5570 W. 159th Street. The facility includes state-of-the-art Life Fitness equipment, tanning, hydra massage, and virtual classes. Members have 24-hour access to the gym, which has 24-hour security and convenient parking. For more information, call 708-897-0543.



Vehicle Sticker Sales Start June 1

All vehicles that are housed in Oak Forest must be registered with the city and must display a current vehicle sticker at all times. The stickers are valid from July 1 - June 30 of each year. Applications will be mailed to residents that currently have their vehicles registered with the city. Online registration will open on June 1. Senior citizens, 65 and older, are eligible to receive two free vehicle stickers per household with proper ID and vehicle registration.



Take Advantage of Online Water Bill Pay

Are you registered for online water bill pay? If not, what are you waiting for? To register, visit the city’s website at www.oak-forest.org and click on Online Payments. Online water billing is provided by Payment Service Network (PSN), a pioneer in the online payment industry.

Once registered, it takes 24 hours for your bill to appear; however, you can pay your bill right away. Also, after you register online, you can use your mobile device to view and pay your water bill and set up recurring payments through Auto-Pay by downloading “PSN Payments” from the App Store® or Google Play™. By paying electronically, you can avoid late fees since online payments post the same day.



If you are paying on your due date, payment must be made no later than 7 p.m. If payment is made after, it will post the next business day, which will incur a late fee.

Through the online water bill pay system, you will be able to print receipts, view payment history, edit preferred payment methods, and change the date of or cancel Auto-Pay. You also will be able to pay by credit or debit card as well as make electronic payments from your checking or savings account.

For more information or if you need help while registering, please call or e-mail PSN, the service provider, at 1-866-917-7368.

PRESRT STD
U.S. Postage PAID
Permit 7
Oak Forest, IL
60452

CAR-RT SORT

Oak Forest Resident or Business
Oak Forest IL 60452

Resident Feedback

Please send your comments, suggestions, compliments, or questions to:
City of Oak Forest, 15440 Central Avenue,
Oak Forest, IL 60452.

City of Oak Forest

- Mayor – Henry L. Kuspa
- City Clerk – David Neuman
- Treasurer – JoAnn Kelly

Aldermen

- 1st Ward – Laura Clemons
- 2nd Ward – Richard Simon
- 3rd Ward – Diane Wolf
- 4th Ward – Paul Selman
- 5th Ward – Jim Emmett
- 6th Ward – James Hortsman
- 7th Ward – Denise Danihel

City Officials

- City Administrator Troy Ishler
- Finance Director Colleen Julian
- Fire Chief Jack Janozik
- Police Chief Tim Kristin
- Public Works Director Rich Rinchich
- Economic Development Travis Bandstra
- Building Commissioner Mike Forbes
- EMA Director Robert Small
- Taxpayer Advocate Guy Gattone

City of Oak Forest

15440 Central Avenue
www.oak-forest.org
www.livingoakforest.org

Office Hours

Monday – Friday: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Select Saturdays: Visit website

City Phone Numbers

- City Hall 708-687-4050
- Police non-emergency 708-687-1376
- Fire non-emergency 708-687-6050
- Public Works 708-535-4090
- Animal Control 708-705-5690

FYI is published by the City of Oak Forest for residents, business owners and friends of the city. 🌿

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 Comcast 19, WOW 6, U-Verse 99

