

The Village's annual Tree Lighting event was enjoyed by all who attended! Thank you to the talented students from District 84 for leading everyone in the singing of Christmas carols. Area children enjoyed crafting with our friends at the Park District. A very special thank you to Two J's Industries and Scott Shannon for providing the gorgeous Christmas tree that sparkled in the gazebo. Lastly, thank you to Ferrero for providing the candy handed out by Santa's elves!



Mayor's Desk



Village Has Received Nearly \$86 Million In Grants

Since 2009, the Village of Franklin Park has received nearly \$86 million in federal, state, and county grant money which has helped to keep our Village safe, attractive, and thriving.

This remarkable achievement is due to the committed efforts of our Board of Trustees and our dedicated staff. Seeking and applying for grants can be painstaking. It also requires working closely with a variety of county, state, and federal agencies, our state and federal legislators, and our neighboring communities. But by being awarded these grants, the Village can support our neighborhoods and help attract more investment to our community. **Most importantly, grant funding supports critical projects while lessening our dependence on property taxes.**

Grant funding has allowed us to upgrade streets, keep our infrastructure in good repair, modernize sewers systems, and provide stormwater detention. Having reliable infrastructure enables business growth and expansion right here in Franklin Park. Grant funding has also helped us beautify our Village by planting trees and to implement other environmental initiatives that enhance our quality of life and help keep our property values stable.

Highlighting Village Accomplishments From 2023

As we enter the new year, I would like

to highlight some of the outstanding achievements from 2023. Many of these projects were supported by grant funding:

Our **downtown streetscaping** along Franklin Avenue improved safety and accessibility as we further beautified the area. Improvements include new stamped concrete, beautiful planters, new trash cans, and bike racks. These improvements will help us attract more new businesses and visitors to the downtown area.

The four-story, 110 room **Wyndham Garden Hotel** in the Franklin Marketplace is on track to be completed in the Fall of 2024 and will bring additional revenue and visitors to our Village. Adjacent to the new hotel, the Village is building a new interior roadway connecting Grand Avenue to the Franklin Marketplace. As part of this new road configuration, two new retail pads were created for future development. The project also included new sidewalks and will feature attractive and sustainable landscaping.

In June, the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Railroad Administration provided the Village with **\$8 million to fund a grade separation engineering study** of the Canadian Pacific Railway and Kansas City Southern tracks that cross through Franklin Park and will look at closing one or more existing at-grade crossings. The future goal of the project is to provide a safer rail crossing for drivers



Barrett F. Pedersen
Mayor

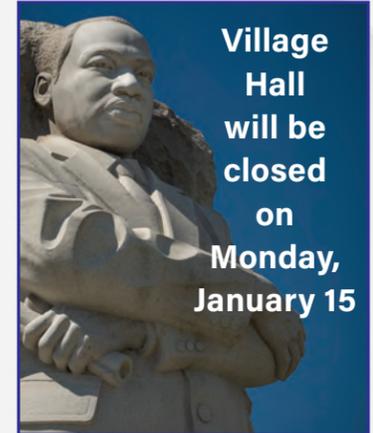
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Village Hall will be closed on Monday, January 15



◀ Mayor's Desk Continued from Page 1.

and pedestrians while reducing the negative impacts of freight movement.

Franklin Park, along with the Village of River Grove, received a **Quiet Zone Designation** in October. This will eliminate train horns in Franklin Park unless the conductor sees a dangerous situation. The Village completed \$1.2 million in safety upgrades to qualify for this critical designation by utilizing an IDOT rail safety grant that supported improvements to the sidewalks and roadways near the Metra station, including pedestrian gates and traffic control devices that regulate traffic at the crossings.

Thanks to a **\$270,000 Green Infrastructure Grant** from the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District, we improved the safety and aesthetics of the industrial area along Pacific Avenue from Hawthorn to Dora Street. Asphalt was removed and new landscaping was added including rain gardens which capture and hold precipitation after storms. This will result in fewer flooded streets and basements throughout Franklin Park and the Silver Creek Basin.

Roadway improvements were made on Schiller Boulevard from Mannheim Road to Scott Street. The project also replaced the existing water main and lead service pipes and added a new sidewalk, curb, and gutter.

I will continue to work with our government partners during the remainder of my current term and throughout my next term in office so that we can secure additional grant funds to invest in our neighborhoods and business corridors. I look forward to updating you on our goals and progress over the next several years.

On behalf of the Village Trustees and Clerk, I wish everyone a Happy and Healthy New Year!!!


Mayor Barrett F. Pedersen

2023 Firefighter and Officer of the Year

The Franklin Park Manilla Lions Club and American Legion Post #974 hosted the annual First Responder Awards Dinner in December. The Fire Department selected Firefighter/Paramedic Kevin Bartnicki as the Firefighter of the Year. Bartnicki has served with the department since 2015. He was selected for this award because he leads by example, consistently demonstrates a good work ethic, works to upgrade his skills, and is interested in ensuring the success of the probationary members. Firefighter Bartnicki is known as someone who will get the job done safely and efficiently.

The Police Department recognized Commander Robert Jensen who was hired as a patrol officer in 1994 and has served as an evidence technician, a field training officer, and as detective. Commander Jensen also served as the department's field training supervisor, street sergeant, and watch commander and currently serves as Commander of the Criminal Investigations Unit. He recently announced that after serving the department for 30 years he will be retiring in April 2024. Commander Jensen was selected because of his patience and strong leadership skills, a commitment to hard work, and dedication to the department and community he serves.



▲ The Franklin Park Manilla Lions Club and American Legion Post #974 hosted the annual First Responder Awards Dinner in December. Mayor Barrett Pedersen joined Fire Chief Mark Stewart in congratulating Kevin Bartnicki who was named Firefighter of the Year. The Police Department selected Commander Robert Jensen as Officer of the Year. Congratulations and thank you for everything you do to serve our community.

Free Covid Tests Available

To place an order to receive four free Covid rapid tests delivered directly to your home, go to COVIDTests.gov.



Passport Processing Events at the Library

The Clerk's Office is pleased to partner with the Franklin Park Library to offer passport appointments on Saturday, January 27, and Saturday, March 30, from 11 AM to 3 PM. To schedule your appointment or for more information, please contact the Clerk's Office at 847-671-8242.

Life Line Screening Event - January 19

Life Line Screening offers safe, painless, non-invasive preventive health screenings that are typically not a part of a routine physical. Life Line will be at the Franklin Park Police Station in the Community Room on Friday, January 19, 2024. Four lifesaving health screenings will be performed for \$149. To learn more, visit our website at vofp.com to download the flyer.

There are three ways to register:

- Call toll-free: 1-844-591-7160
- Online: <https://llsa.social/HC>
- Text: the word circle to 216-279-1607

Congratulations to the winners of the 2023 Best Decorated Home for the Holidays Contest!

We love your creativity and festive holiday spirit!

WINNER

The Kubik home at 3629 Emerson Street

2ND PLACE

The Rodriguez home at 3202 Louis Street

3RD PLACE

The Daniel and Lawrence home at 9919 Montana Avenue