

# *Year in Review* 2024

FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & ZONING



## *A Message from* **Mayor Barrett Pedersen**

2024 marked a year of continued success for the village, as staff worked to improve our community through vital infrastructure upgrades and forward-thinking planning initiatives.

Last year, we made a focused effort to make the quality of life of our residents better through road reconstruction, upgraded water mains, and the replacement of lead service lines. As a result, we were able to ensure that 58 homes have access to safe, clean water. None of this would have been possible without the help of Congressman Jesús “Chuy” Garcia. As part of these upgrades, we were also able to provide a smoother ride on Schiller Boulevard.

We’ve also begun two key planning initiatives that are sure to shape a more accessible and environmentally friendly future for Franklin Park.

First, staff has been working with the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) to create a plan to transform Grand Avenue into a safe, accessible, and thriving corridor. With feedback from residents, businessowners, and community stakeholders, the Grand Avenue Corridor Plan focuses on safety for pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers; streetscaping, landscaping, and walkability; and supporting small businesses while attracting reinvestment on vacant properties.

The Village was also selected as one of five communities to partner with the Cook County Department of Environment and Sustainability and Metro Strategies Group to create a Climate Resiliency Plan. Through this partnership, our community will receive funding to support projects that reduce flooding, plant trees, expand landscaping efforts, promote residents’ health and well-being, and improve Franklin Park’s ability to address the negative effects of climate change.

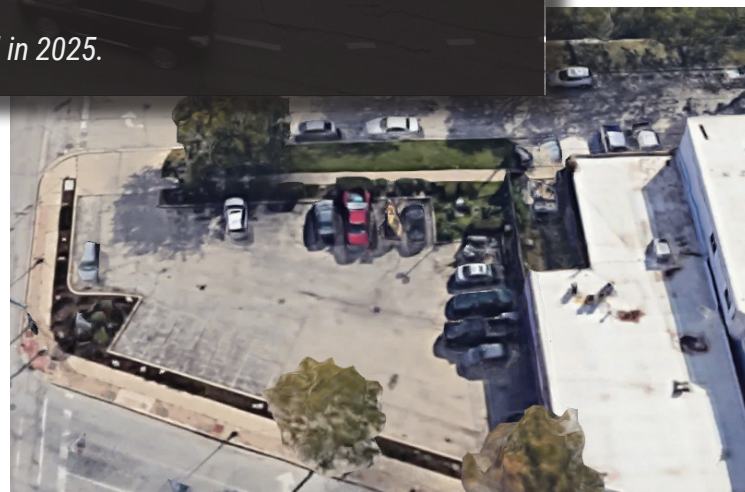
I am excited about these accomplishments and can’t wait to see what the future holds for our community! ■



# Before & After:



Additional elements and landscaping will be installed in 2025.



Google Maps imagery of 9601 Franklin Avenue before improvements. For years, site was a private parking lot.

*Building upon recent improvements to make Franklin Avenue more walkable and vibrant, the Village transformed a private parking lot into a public plaza in the heart of Downtown Franklin Park.*

# Downtown Beautification

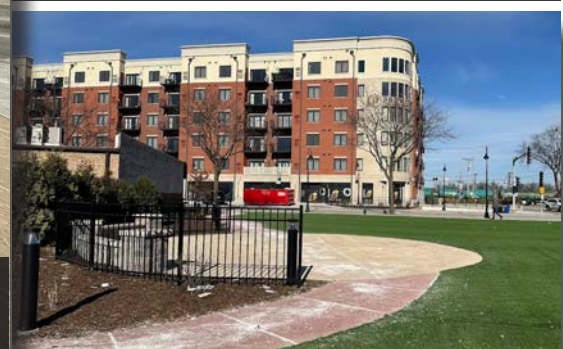
The Village is proud to showcase a new feature in Downtown Franklin Park! In 2024, the Village transformed the southwest corner of Franklin Avenue and 25th Avenue into a public plaza that will serve Downtown Franklin Park for many years to come. The plaza provides a much needed community amenity while creating a gateway to the neighborhood with landscaping. The plaza, located at 9601 Franklin Avenue, was formerly a vacant lot with private parking.



A fountain will be installed here in 2025.



Minneapolis Avenue can be closed to accommodate additional plaza space.



Improvements to the lot include the installation of an artificial grass lawn, decorative stamped concrete that mirrors recent streetscaping enhancements, and sidewalk curb and gutter replacement for improved stormwater management. Minneapolis Avenue also features decorative concrete because it has been redesigned to act as an extension of the plaza when the road is closed for larger events. The new plaza will provide an open space where visitors can relax and socialize. The space will also be home to community events and act as a centerpiece to Downtown Franklin Park. This is one of many focused efforts to beautify Franklin Avenue in the Village's Downtown District. ■



# Grand Avenue Corridor Plan

Created in partnership with CMAP, this plan is meant to guide the vision for Grand Avenue over the next ten to twenty years. The plan will serve as a framework for elected officials, village staff, and community members to make informed decisions regarding land use, transportation, economic development, and other infrastructure improvements along Grand Avenue in Franklin Park.

The plan focuses on:

Enhancing transportation safety and making Grand Avenue safer for pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicles alike.

Making Grand Avenue pedestrian-friendly through streetscaping and intersection improvements to create a more walkable and enjoyable experience for all.

Promoting access to public transit along the Grand Avenue corridor by making it more convenient and seamless to reach bus stops.

Making Grand Avenue equally accessible by walking, biking, bus, and private transport.

Identifying economic development opportunities and strategies to support small businesses and utilize vacant properties.

We are excited to put this plan in motion to make Grand Avenue better than ever. For more information on the planning process and to access the full plan, please visit the project website at:

[engage.cmap.illinois.gov/franklin-park-grand-avenue-corridor-plan](https://engage.cmap.illinois.gov/franklin-park-grand-avenue-corridor-plan) ■

*After years of collaboration and public engagement, the Village is ready to adopt the Grand Avenue Corridor Plan! The Village is grateful for the support that the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) provided. Their partnership and outreach ensured that the plan would be tailor made to fit the unique needs of our community.*

## Public Outreach



Tree lighting and Winterfest  
December 2023



Community workshop  
January 2024



Franklin Park Fest  
June 2024



Street Dance  
June 2024



Passow Elementary School Open House  
August 2024



Summer Concert Series  
August 2024



Fall Fest Parade and Pumpkin Fest  
October 2024



Visioning workshop  
October 2024



Chicago Metropolitan  
Agency for Planning

THE VILLAGE OF  
**FRANKLIN PARK** ILLINOIS



# Pardon Our Dust!

## Residential Road Improvements

*From resurfacing projects to complete road reconstruction, Village staff has been hard at work to make sure that residents have a smoother ride and modern infrastructure in our community. We thank you for your patience as we build toward a better tomorrow!*

The main focus of 2024's Capital Improvements Program was to give back to our residents by providing better conditions on our local roads. In total, \$5.2 million in street resurfacing and reconstruction projects were completed.

In partnership with Congressman Jesús "Chuy" Garcia, the Village was able to complete Phase II of the Schiller Boulevard Reconstruction Project. Key features of this initiative included the replacement of a substandard water main, the removal of hazardous lead service lines, and reconstruction of the Schiller from Scott Street to Rose Street. As a result of these efforts, we were able to ensure that 58 properties throughout the Village has safe access to clean water as part of these efforts.

The following roads were also resurfaced in 2024:

- Lincoln Street from Minneapolis Avenue to Schiller Boulevard
- Ernst Street from Franklin Avenue to Grand Avenue
- Dora Street from Franklin Avenue to Grand Avenue
- George Street from Nevada Avenue to Fullerton Avenue ■



*Resurfacing occurred on sections of Lincoln, Ernst, Dora, and George Streets.*



*The Schiller Boulevard Reconstruction Project included the installation of a water main that meets modern standards, the removal of lead service lines, and resurfacing of the road.*



*Along with the installation of new water mains, lead service lines were replaced to ensure that properties had safe access to clean water.*



*Our commercial corridors saw reinvestment, redevelopment, and new tenants including small businesses and international brands. We were excited to welcome these restaurants among many new businesses in 2024!*

# OPEN *for* BUSINESS



**THE GOAL LINE PIZZERIA & SPORTS BAR - 9700 FRANKLIN AVENUE - GOALLINEBAR.COM**

Family-owned and family-friendly sports bar and grill in the heart of Downtown Franklin Park.



**MCDONALD'S - 9450 GRAND AVENUE**

McDonald's brought new life to a vacant lot that has been an eyesore for years with this new location.



**NINA'S - 9741-9743 FRANKLIN AVENUE**

Downtown Franklin Park sports bar that also specializes in authentic Indian cuisine.



**TACO PROS - 2830 MANNHEIM ROAD SUITE 100 - TACOPROS.COM**

This Chicagoland chain brings quality ingredients and Mexican flavors to Franklin Marketplace.



# Industrial Redevelopment

*Franklin Park continues to experience large-scale growth and reinvestment within its industrial sector. In 2024, the Village welcomed 27 new industrial employers resulting in 1,170 new jobs. This growth carries on because of the Village's welcoming business environment and our location at the center of Chicagoland next to freeways, railyards, employment hubs, and public transportation.*

CRG has completed the construction of a 66,552 square foot industrial building on a site that formerly contained outdated buildings that sat empty for years. With its key location with easy access to the tollway and O'Hare, this site is ideal for logistics companies.



**THE CUBES AT ORD - 10698 SEYMOUR AVENUE**



**CLIMATE SOLUTIONS - 9233 KING AVENUE**

After years of steady growth, Climate Solutions has moved to 9233 King Avenue. The company completed significant improvements to modernize the building with new windows, loading docks, and an interior buildout that best suits their needs. With the new location, Climate Solutions is able to provide 95 job opportunities.

Construction is ongoing at 2553 Edgington Street where Digital Realty is expanding their campus. Improvements include the removal of contaminated soil, a new water detention pond, and landscaping. Upon completion, the \$421,300,000 redevelopment will contain a two-story, 405,111 square foot data center.



**DIGITAL REALTY - 2553 EDGINGTON STREET \*RENDERING OF DEVELOPMENT**



**3600 RIVER ROAD \*RENDERING OF DEVELOPMENT**

The former Dean Foods site is being redeveloped into a modern 97,525 square foot facility that is suited for warehousing and distribution. In total, the site has seen approximately \$7,500,000 in reinvestment to make this project happen.



*The Village made progress on key planning projects and infrastructure improvements in 2024. While these initiatives are not yet complete, they are sure to be significant in shaping the future of Franklin Park.*

## Connect Franklin Park

*Bridging Barriers. Creating Opportunities.*

In 2023, Franklin Park was awarded \$8 million in funding through the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) Railroad Crossing Elimination Grant Program to complete project development and final design for an underpass near Downtown Franklin Park. An additional \$1.8 million in support came from the Cook County Department of Transportation and Highways and the Illinois Commerce Commission. This project will provide a safer railroad crossing for roadway users that offers north-south travel without train-related delays or blockages that residents often see in Franklin Park. The project will not only benefit our community, but the region as a whole, as vocal support expressing the need for this effort came from Congressman Jesús “Chuy” García (IL-04) and Congresswoman Delia C. Ramirez (IL-03) as well as Senators Dick Durbin (D-IL) and Tammy Duckworth (D-IL).

On October 7th, 2024, the Village officially selected Gannett Fleming TransSystems as partner consultants on this important endeavor. Having successfully led 14 similar rail projects in the region, the firm has the expertise that we are confident can make this plan a reality in Franklin Park. ■



Mayor Pedersen speaks at a press conference in 2023 with Congressman Jesús “Chuy” García (Left) Senator Dick Durbin (Right) discussing the significance of this project.

 GANNETT  
FLEMING

TRANSYSTEMS

# Ongoing Projects

## Climate Resiliency Planning

Through a grant program sponsored by the Cook County Department of Sustainability and Environment, Franklin Park was selected as one of five communities to develop a Climate Resiliency Plan. Following a community-driven process, completing and implementing the plan will improve the Village’s ability to combat the negative effects of climate change through green infrastructure, flood and stormwater management, and the expansion of our tree canopy.

On November 13, 2024, the Village hosted an open house expo to kick off the planning process. To get involved with this initiative, please email [FranklinParkResiliency.Plan@cookcountyil.gov](mailto:FranklinParkResiliency.Plan@cookcountyil.gov)! ■





## The Department of Community Development and Zoning



**Nicholas Walny**  
Director of Community Development and Zoning



**Ryan Adriatico**  
Senior Planner



**Rudolph Repa**  
Village Planner

# 2024 by the numbers

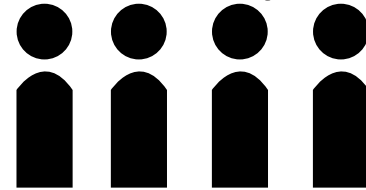
**\$4.8 million**  
in grant funding for projects & infrastructure improvements.



Franklin Park  
welcomed  
**45** new businesses  
or expansions



Business attraction  
helped to create  
**1,370** new jobs.



Infrastructure  
projects  
ensured that  
**58** properties  
had access to clean  
water with the removal  
of lead service lines.



# Welcome to Franklin Park!

Alongside Mayor Barrett Pedersen, Clerk April Arellano, and Village Trustees, the Department of Community Development and Zoning held ribbon cutting ceremonies to celebrate new businesses and developments.



ANGEL'S CLOSET - 9706 FRANKLIN AVENUE



DOCEO REAL ESTATE - 9758 GRAND AVENUE



MAHARAJ INDIAN GRILL AND BANQUET - 3400 RIVER ROAD



MCDONALD'S - 9450 GRAND AVENUE



NINA'S RESTOBAR - 9741-9743 FRANKLIN AVENUE



TACO PROS - 2830 MANNHEIM ROAD SUITE 100



WE ROCK THE SPECTRUM - 10123 GRAND AVENUE

## BOARDS & COMMISSIONS

### Economic Development Commission

The Economic Development Commission reviewed 3 applications for the Cook County Real Estate 6b Classification. The County program is designed to encourage industrial development and increase employment opportunities.

### Zoning Board of Appeals

The Zoning Board of Appeals reviewed 12 cases pertaining to zoning related matters.

This included 3 conditional uses, 6 text amendments, 1 map amendment, 1 variance, and 1 subdivision.

### Plan Commission

The Plan Commission provided vital feedback for ongoing planning initiatives and the Grand Avenue Corridor Plan that will help shape the future of our community.

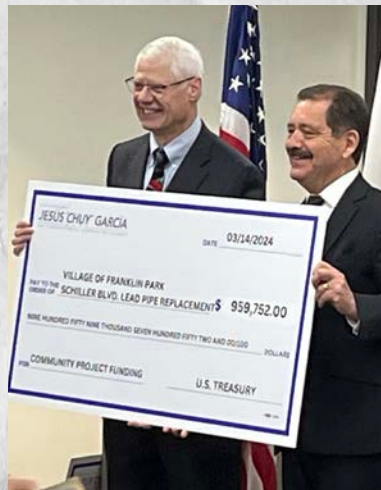




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2



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4



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From left to right, top to bottom: (1) Visitors enjoyed the attractions, food, and entertainment at Franklin Park Fest (2) Mayor Pedersen was joined by Cook County President, Toni Preckwinkle, Representative Bradley Stephens, Mayor Nick Caiafa, Mayor Dave Guerin, Cook County Commissioner Maggie Trevor, Forest Preserves Interim General Superintendent Eileen Figel, Village Clerk April Arellano, and representatives of the Forest Preserve District of Cook County for a ribbon cutting ceremony to commemorate the new bridge over Lawrence Avenue for the Des Plaines River Trail (3) The Village of Franklin Park was proud to be selected by Congressman Jesús "Chuy" García (IL-4) and Congresswoman Delia Ramirez (IL-03) for Community Project Funding for two key infrastructure projects (4) CPKC's historic steam engine, "The Empress," made a stop in Franklin Park for train enthusiasts (5) Opticote celebrated its 50th anniversary, a huge benchmark for a proud Franklin Park business