

In This Issue...

- Curt's Café Receives \$2M Gift
- Spring Promotional Opportunity
- Second St. Parking Lot Reconstruction Mid-March - May
- Restaurant Meeting: Wednesday, April 17 at 2 PM
- Exterior Improvement Grant Program
- Community Navigator Business Support Program
- Hello Alice Small Business Grant Program
- Small Business Development Center: No-Cost Business Counseling
- SCORE Mentoring & Webinars: Low and No Cost Business Services
- "Take Care" Packages To Support Newly-arrived Migrants
- Contacting the Office of Business Development

Curt's Café Receives \$2M Gift



Curt's Café has been selected to receive a \$2 million gift as an awardee of MacKenzie Scott's Yield Giving Open Call. The organization was selected from among 6,353 applications from all 50 states, Washington, D.C., and Puerto

Rico after a process of multiple levels of review, feedback and diligence involving peer applicants and an external evaluation panel recruited for experience relevant to this cause.

[Curt's Café](#) is dedicated to improving outcomes for young adults living in at-risk situations through work and life skills training that they provide to cohorts in the Evanston and Highland Park cafés. [Click here to learn more.](#)

Spring Promotional Opportunity



Spring has arrived in Highland Park, and there's so much to celebrate! We've created an ever-growing, [downloadable digital Spring Guide](#) of things to do in Highland Park this season with sections dedicated to Passover, Easter, and more.

Featuring over 60 pages of events, promotions, workshops, specials, and more, this downloadable Guide is a great way to advertise your business at no cost. The Guide is distributed weekly March – April via the Weekender (approximately 8,200 recipients), linked to social media, and housed permanently on enjoyhighlandpark.com.

Want your local business to be featured in the Guide? If your business has an event, promotion, special, workshop, or something else exciting happening now through April 30, please reach out to Marketing Coordinator, Diane Larson (dlarson@cityhpil.com) for information on how you can be included.

Second St. Parking Lot Reconstruction Mid-March - May

The Second St. Parking Lot Reconstruction Project began on Monday, March

18. Below you will find the most recent update regarding the Second St. Parking Lot Reconstruction Project.

Reconstruction of the lot is anticipated to be complete in late May. The project will enhance available parking for customers accessing businesses along Second St. The project includes reconstruction of the pavement to convert it from an asphalt pavement to an environmentally friendly permeable pavement. Other improvements include LED lighting and conduit for future EV Charging Stations.

The City has been in direct communication with impacted businesses that rely on the parking lot for customer parking, deliveries, and refuse, recycling, and compost containers. Construction fencing will be placed around the perimeter of the lot, including the sidewalk in front of the parking lot.

Access to businesses and customer parking along Second Street will be maintained throughout the reconstruction of the parking lot. Parking options include:

- On-street parking (with the exception of two 15-minute parking spots in front of Terry's Toffee, which have been designated for use by the construction team)
- Parking in the Renaissance Place Garage

To learn more about the reconstruction of this parking lot, and to explore additional improvements planned for Second Street during spring/summer 2024, please visit cityhpil.com/construction.

If you're interested in receiving updates about the project, you can sign up for the dedicated project email list by emailing cityhp@cityhpil.com.

Restaurant Meeting: Wednesday, April 17, 2 PM



The City is hosting a meeting for restaurant owners and managers on Wednesday, April 17, 2024, at 2 PM at City Hall in the Council Chambers.

Collaboration is crucial for the ongoing success of the community's restaurants.

The City consistently reviews its existing practices, policies, and initiatives to align with its mission and achieve its goals, founded on its core priorities, including Economic Development.

The purpose of the meeting is to share highlights of the City's Business Development Strategic Plan, which sets forth various ways in which we work with existing businesses, market current businesses with an emphasis on supporting local establishments, and highlight current economic incentives used to attract and retain businesses. We will also share information about a proposed restaurant incentive and invite feedback from restaurateurs.

Please RSVP via email to chersch@cityhpil.com.

Exterior Improvement Grant Program



The ***Exterior Improvement Grant Program*** offered by the City is designed to provide both assistance and encouragement to commercial property owners and sales-tax-generating local businesses citywide to improve their storefronts' appearance and functionality. The program has the following key features:

- The cost of eligible improvements is shared equally between the applicant and the City.
- The maximum Grant amount is \$20,000 per year for up to five consecutive years or a total of \$100,000; however, a grant for the same improvement would not be considered within the same five-year period.
- The eligible improvements must be visible from the right-of-way.

The annual program budget is \$100,000 and is available on a first-come, first-served basis.

The program is an excellent opportunity for local businesses and property owners to revamp their storefronts, enhance their appeal, and lessen the financial burden. Please visit [Exterior Improvement Grant Program](#) to learn more and download the [Application](#).

If you have questions about the program, please contact Business Development Manager Carolyn Hersch at 847.926.1027 or via e-mail at chersch@cityhpil.com.

Featured image: Floral Gardens Exterior Paint Refresh

Community Navigator Business Support Program

[Community Navigators](#) is a support program to assist small businesses, particularly minority, women, rural, and veteran-owned businesses. They provide outreach to raise awareness on federal and state programs, and provide 1:1 technical assistance, etc. For more information, please click [HERE](#).

Hello Alice Small Business Grant Program



Discover small business grants for every stage of your small business adventure. Grant opportunities are recommended based on your unique profile and delivered to your inbox weekly. The search for free money doesn't get any easier! In partnership with the Global Entrepreneurship Network (GEN) and with funding from Etsy and Progressive, [Hello Alice](#) is a free online platform that helps businesses launch and grow through every step of their entrepreneurial journey. The Small Business Growth Fund provides small business owners with knowledge, funding, networking opportunities, and peer-to-peer connections with more than one million small business owners.

[Learn about Hello Alice funding opportunities.](#)

Small Business Development Center: Low and No-Cost Business Services



[Small Business Development Centers](#) (SBDC) are located throughout the state and provide information, confidential business guidance, training, and other free resources for start-ups and existing small businesses. If you need help with a business plan, marketing, financial bookkeeping, finding grants, starting and growing a business, click [HERE](#). To find a Center near you, click [HERE](#). Please note that many SBDCs do provide Spanish assistance. If you need help finding an SBDC that provides Spanish assistance, please contact Diana Alfaro at diana.alfaro@illinois.gov.

SCORE Mentoring at the Highland Park Public Library & Free Webinars

SCORE offers in-person or virtual sessions using phone, email, or video

All sessions are free and confidential. SCORE mentors are successful business professionals, some retired, some working, from all industries and experiences.



SCORE recently added a new [YouTube channel](#) where all previously recorded webinars can be accessed.

To schedule an in-person or virtual session, visit score.org/northchicago and register to "Find a Mentor". You will be asked to provide the nature of your business interest. Please include whether you prefer in-person or virtual mentoring (phone, email, video) and note the **Highland Park Public Library** even if you prefer a virtual session.

Upcoming Free Webinar: April 2, 12:00pm CDT
Email Marketing: How to be Relevant Now.
[Click here to learn more.](#)

"Take Care Packages" To Support Newly-arrived Migrants

"TAKE CARE"

PACKAGES

Highland Park student volunteers with SaLT (Service and Learning Together) are working to collect donations for ["Take Care" packages](#) for newly-arrived migrants while they await transfer to the Chicago Processing Center. SaLT volunteers are partnering with the City of Highland Park and the Rotary Club of Highland Park/Highwood to collect donations that will be used to create these thoughtful "Take Care" packages.

Donations may be dropped off at City Hall (1707 St. Johns Ave.) and [other convenient locations](#) throughout Highland Park, including First Bank of Highland Park and Highland Park Bank & Trust.

Contacting the Office of Business Development

This newsletter is produced by the City of Highland Park's Office of Business Development. The City encourages business owners and managers to share information regarding upcoming events, promotions or news for possible inclusion in the City's marketing modalities, including [The Weekender](#), [Enjoy Highland Park](#), and [social media](#). Please send these items to the City via email to: businessdevelopment@cityhpil.com. The City reserves the right to edit and/or filter submissions.

For general business inquiries and assistance, contact Business Development Manager Carolyn Hersch at chersch@cityhpil.com or 847.926.1027.

Additional Resources

[Available Commercial Space](#)

[Business Directory](#)

[City of Highland Park Business Development Strategic Plan](#)

[Chamber Of Commerce](#)

[U.S. Small Business Administration](#)

[Job Center of Lake County - Business Services](#)

[Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity:](#)

- [Small Business](#)

[College of Lake County Small Business Development Center](#)

[Hello Alice](#)

[SCORE](#)

[SCORE YouTube Channel](#)

[Development Centers of Illinois](#)

- [Community Navigator Business Support Program](#)
- [Grant Opportunities](#)

[Visit Lake County](#)

[Women-in-Business Resources](#)

[Join Our Mailing List](#)



City of Highland Park | 1707 St. Johns Avenue, Highland Park, IL 60035

[Unsubscribe acivitello@cityhpil.com](#)

[Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)

Sent by cityhp@cityhpil.com powered by



Try email marketing for free today!