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Featured Business of the Week: Studio Boka



[Studio BOKA](#) specializes in Russian manicure and pedicure techniques. Studio BOKA's expertly trained and internationally-certified staff are prepared to offer a classic look or the latest design trends. Studio BOKA offers a variety of services including manicures, pedicures, nail art, and nail extensions. Put your best foot (or hand) forward this spring with Studio BOKA!

508 Central Ave., Ste. 204 / 630.381.5186 / nailsalonthighlandpark.com

Bella Via is Moving!

We are pleased to announce that Bella Via Ristorante is relocating to 431 Temple Ave. in the Moraine Business District of Highland Park. The City will provide more information on their opening date when it becomes available.

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 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 for placement of recycling containers)
- 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.

Central Business District Resurfacing Project

As part of the City's budgeted capital improvement projects for 2024, resurfacing streets in the Central Business District is particularly vital. While this work may have its inconveniences, this information is intended to assist residents and businesses about what to expect will be happening and when. Here are the resurfacing project limits listed below and on the map.

- 1) Elm Place (From Green Bay Road to St Johns Avenue)
- 2) Green Bay Road (From Elm Place to Laurel Avenue)
- 3) Central Avenue (From Green Bay Road to Linden Avenue)
- 4) Laurel Avenue (From Green Bay Road to St Johns Avenue)
- 5) Second Street (From Central Avenue to Laurel Avenue)
- 6) First Street (From Green Bay Road to Laurel Avenue)
- 7) St Johns Avenue (From Elm Place to Laurel Avenue)
- 8) Sheridan Road (from Elm Place to Central Avenue)



The majority of the work is to be done overnight to minimize disruption to businesses.

Improvements will include pedestrian crosswalk enhancements, curb replacement and repair where needed, storm/sanitary grate updates as warranted, and ADA Upgrades to sidewalks at corners where warranted. Work is tentatively scheduled to start beginning of May 2024 with completion by September 2024.

For questions about the project, please call Public Works at 847.432.0807.

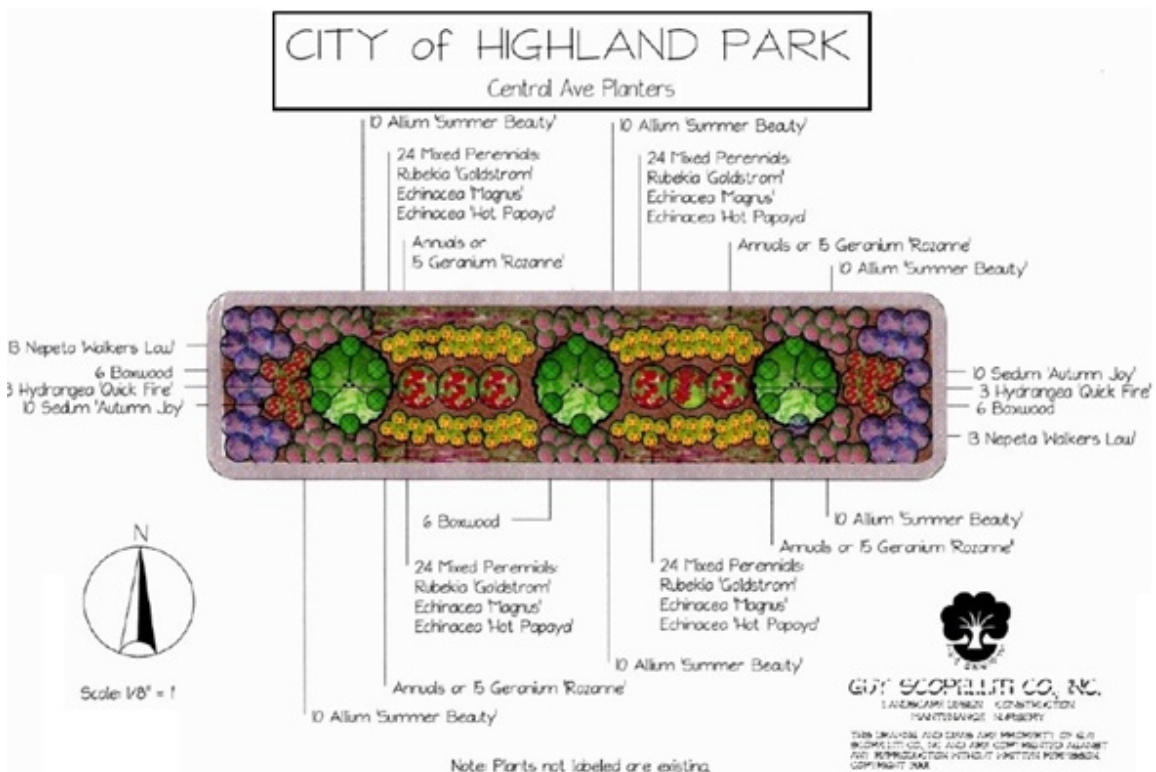
Prohibition of Sales and Possession of Illicit THC Products

Prohibition of Retail Sales of Illicit THC Products and Possession of Illicit THC Products by People Under Age 21

- New regulations prohibiting the retail sales of illicit THC products and possession of those products by individuals under the age of 21 took effect on April 1, 2024.
- The prohibition includes but is not limited to delta-8 tetrahydrocannabinol ("THC"), delta-10 THC, THC-O, kratom, and products containing delta-9 THC above specified thresholds. More information is available in [Ch. 125 of the City Code](#).

Feedback from key stakeholder groups expressing concern about unregulated THC and kratom products was considered by the City Council, staff, and corporation counsel. **Business owners may share feedback with the City Manager's Office at 847.926.1000 or cityhp@cityhpil.com.**

Central Avenue Beautification



The City is beautifying its landscaping along Central Avenue. Enjoy a sneak peek photo of our planter plan with new spring flowers!

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 cityhp@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: ATELIER by elliestyled awnings and window signage

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 16, 12:00pm CDT

A Basic QuickBooks Guide for Small Business Owners

[Click here to learn more.](#)

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](#).

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.

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.](#)

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](#)

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

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

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

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

- [Small Business Development Centers of Illinois](#)

[Hello Alice](#)

[SCORE](#)

[SCORE YouTube Channel](#)

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

[Visit Lake County](#)

[Women-in-Business Resources](#)

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