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May 9, 2024



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Welcome New Business: Secret World Books



[Secret World Books](#), in the heart of downtown opened its doors on April 29,

Independent Bookstore Day. A dream of co-owners Gayle and Michael Brandeis, their business venture is named after Gayle's childhood story, "The Secret World."

Gayle, a seasoned writer and educator, and comic specialist Michael envision a common place where literature and hobbies intertwine. With an initial focus on used books and plans to expand with new titles, their shelves will celebrate diverse voices, independent presses, and authors from the North Shore. Moreover, the store aims to create a vibrant community hub, offering writing workshops, book clubs, and gaming nights for all to enjoy. Visit their store next to Curt's Cafe on Second Street.

1774 Second Street / 847.469.4875 / secretworldbooks.com

One-Stop Shop for Talent Resources: Job Center of Lake County

For some business owners it can be difficult finding reliable and quality talent. Fortunately, Job Center of Lake County provides business owners with a variety of resources to recruit, train, and retain train skilled workers. Here are some beneficial programs that nearly all types of businesses could use to improve their talent pool:

To Recruit:

- Post on the Hire Lake County Job Center website: [Fill out the Employer Job Opportunity Form.](#)
- Participate in a [Virtual Job Fairs](#) (VJF): virtual job fairs are a new opportunity for employers to advertise their organization and connect with qualified job applicants at no cost. Employers will be able to setup virtual job booths where interested job seekers can learn more about their organization and available job openings.

To Train:

- Participate in the [On the Job Training Program \(OJT\)](#): a "hire-first" training program in which the employer enters into an agreement with Lake County Workforce Development to hire, train and retain a job seeker.
 - Through this program, the business may be reimbursed for up to 75% of the new employee's wages, for up to 6 months or 1,000 hours, whichever comes first.

To Retain:

- The [Incumbent Worker Training \(IWT\)](#) program helps local employers develop and implement training programs for current employees who need intensive services in order to retain employment.
 - Training costs may be reimbursed from 50% and up to 90% or more based on the size of the company.

Phase II of Briergate Business District

Improvements Begin on May 13

Phase II of the Briergate Crossing Business improvement project will take place on Old Skokie Valley Road beginning 300' north of Old Deerfield and continuing to the North end of the street where the pavement ends.

Work is expected to start on Monday, May 13, 2024 and the anticipated completion date is August 23, 2024. Working hours will be per the City Ordinance: Monday-Friday 7AM-7PM and Saturday 9AM-5PM.

The project scope consists of:

- Construction of concrete paver parking
- Sidewalk improvements
- Improved drainage at the site
- Roadway improvements
- Lighting and landscaping

Access will be maintained on Old Skokie Valley Road throughout the project with lane closures occurring during working hours. Parking stall improvements will be occur in stages to limit the amount of parking disrupted throughout the project.

For live updates on this project and other capital improvement projects visit the [City's Capital Improvements Program dashboard](#).

For questions about the project, please call Rod Kovilic, City Project Manager, at 847.926.1138 or via email at rkovilic@cityhpil.com or Mike Kowalski, Consultant Engineer for the Ciorba Group, via email at mkowalski@ciorba.com.

Central Business District Resurfacing Project

The City is excited to share information about updated improvements within the Central Business District. As part of the City's Capital Improvement Plan, the Central Business District will see newly resurfaced streets and improved pedestrian access. Below is a list of the impacted streets that are part of this project.

- Elm Place (Green Bay Road to St Johns Avenue)
- Green Bay Road (Elm Place to Laurel Avenue)
- Central Avenue (Green Bay Road to Linden Avenue)

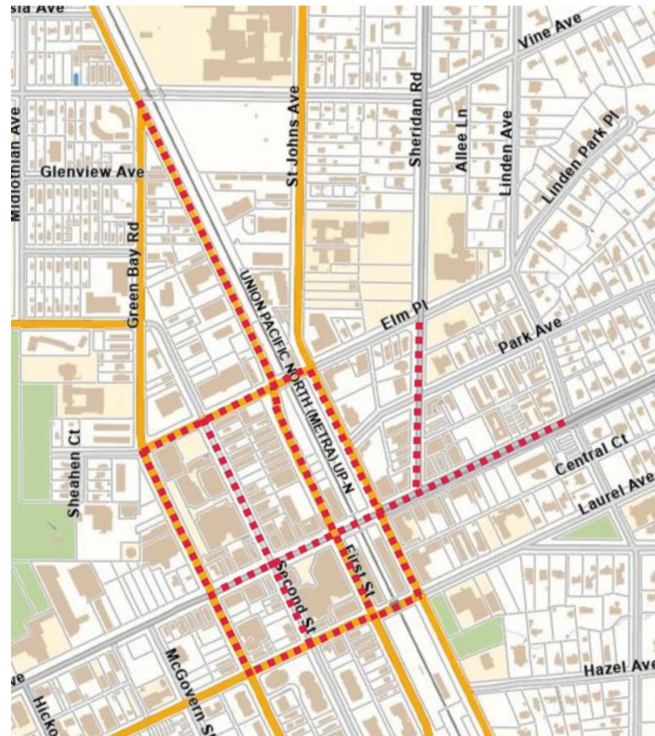
- Laurel Avenue (Green Bay Road to St Johns Avenue)
- Second Street (Central Avenue to Laurel Avenue)
- First Street (Green Bay Road to Laurel Avenue)
- St Johns (Elm Place to Laurel Avenue)
- Sheridan Road (Elm Place to Central Avenue)

The improvement project will be completed in two phases with a majority of the work to be completed at night between the hours of 9PM – 6AM, Monday thru Friday (into Saturday morning).

Phase 1 will encompass concrete work, to include concrete cutting, removing and replacing, as well as the pouring of concrete foundations for new pedestrian signals. Phase 1 work is to begin May 13, 2024 with a tentative completion date of June 28, 2024.

Phase 2 work will encompass all asphalt work, including grinding down of the current asphalt and the installation of new asphalt. Phase 2 work will begin July 8, 2024 with a tentative completion in the beginning of September. The City requested work to begin July 8, 2024 to prevent overlap with the July 4, 2024 holiday and Independence Day events. For more

If your business has any questions specific to the project, please contact Ashley Palbitska, Assistant to the City Manager, via phone **847.926.1034** or email apalbitska@cityhphil.com.



2024 Event Season Lot Participation



The third season of special events and festivals is returning to The Lot in Downtown Highland Park! Featuring old favorites and exciting new themes, there are plenty of unique dining, family friendly entertainment, weekend concerts and food fests for everyone this season at The Lot.

For more information on how your business can be a part of the 2024 event season at The Lot as a participating or sponsoring business, please contact the City's event management team, Ripple Public Relations, info@ripplepublicrelations.com, or call 847.432.6000.

Participate in the Independence Day Parade



The City of Highland Park and the Park District of Highland Park invite all community members and businesses to spotlight [“Sweet Home Highland Park”](#) at the 2024 Independence Day Parade.

The parade will take place at 1 PM on Thursday, July 4, 2024 with a new parade route. This year’s parade theme invites residents and business owners can showcase their love for Highland Park in their float design and festive décor.

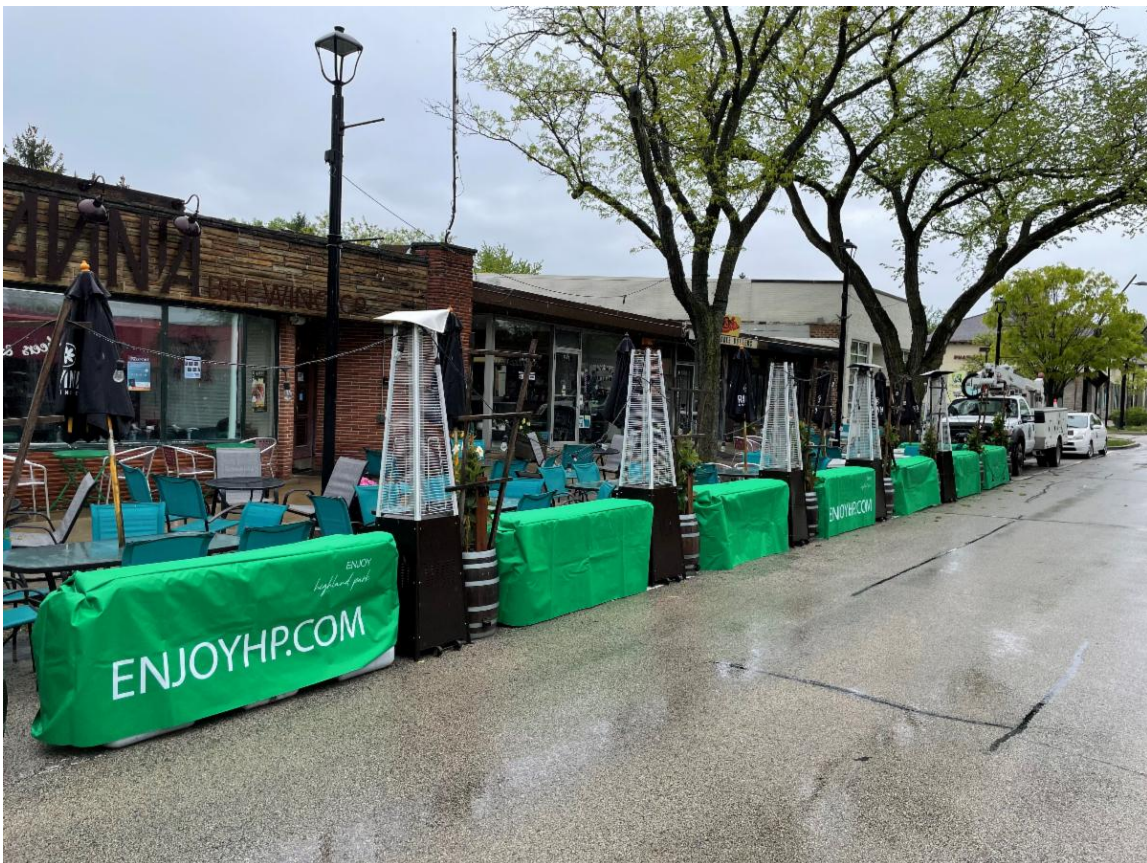
To participate:

- Complete the [parade application form](#) and submit the appropriate fee
 - No applications will be accepted after Friday, May 31, 2024
 - Applications will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis.
- The parade is open to Highland Park residents, Highland Park businesses, or non-profit organizations serving Highland Park residents
- No refunds of entry fees will be granted after Friday, May 31, or due to inclement weather on the day of the parade

Businesses or organizations interested in sponsoring the parade are invited to contact, Assistant City Manager Erin Jason at ejason@cityhpil.com for more information.

For more information, visit cityhpil.com/independenceday.

Exterior Improvement Grant Program



The City's **Exterior Improvement Grant Program** 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 is 50% of the project cost up to \$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: [Ravinia Brewing's](#) outdoor seating area.

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 Webinars:

Financial Series 2: Using Financial Data to Manage Your Business - May 9 11:00am CT

The workshop will introduce you to two common types of financial reports for a

product- and a service-related business, and learn how to use these reports to analyze business performance.

[Reserve your spot.](#)

AI for Business - May 9 6:30pm CT

Learn the basics of how to use Artificial Intelligence technologies, how they will make your life easier, and what the benefits are to you and your business. See some real examples of how to use the ChatGPT, Bard, and other platforms that now use AI.

[Reserve your spot.](#)

Financial Projections & Risk Management - With Help From AI (ChatGPT) - May 14 10:00am CT

This webinar will guide and assist you as an entrepreneur in understanding where you might find funding and how to appeal to investors. You will learn what investors want and how to position your business for a successful pitch and increase your likelihood of getting funding.

[Reserve your spot.](#)

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@cityhphil.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](#)

[Hello Alice](#)

[SCORE](#)

[SCORE YouTube Channel](#)

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

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

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

- [Small Business Development Centers of Illinois](#)
- [Community Navigator Business Support Program](#)
- [Grant Opportunities](#)

[Visit Lake County](#)

[Women-in-Business Resources](#)

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