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20 Years in Highland Park: Bluegrass



Congratulations to [Bluegrass Restaurant](#)! This beloved Highland Park staple celebrates 20 years of service in the community. Their blend of southern flavors with traditional American cuisine and a dash of New Orleans flair is distinctively Bluegrass. Along with their delicious menu, Bluegrass hosts a number of events throughout the year, from boils and smoking events to wine and beer dinners featuring the best in American-made liquor, as well as favorite special occasions like Mardi Gras and BBQ Fest. Stop in for a meal to enjoy Bluegrass' welcoming hospitality and congratulate owners Jim and Joanie Lederer and the Bluegrass team on this achievement!

1636 Old Deerfield Road | 847.831.0595 | bluegrasshp.com

Four Small Business Micro Grant Opportunities

Start.Pivot.Grow – These working capital micro grants may be used for utilities, commercial rent, inventory, professional development, software, marketing, or bookkeeping services. To qualify for the grant, you must be in business for at least two years, have annual revenue of \$50,000 or more, and have 1-5 employees, including the owner.

Application deadline: Quarterly (next winner announced July 8)

Grant amount: \$2,500

[Click here](#) for more information.

Small Business Digital Ready Grant - As part of their goal to support 1 million small businesses by 2030, Verizon is launching a new round of grant funding open to small businesses. To be eligible for this grant application, you must have an account on Verizon Small Business Digital Ready. To unlock this grant application, you must have an account on Verizon Small Business Digital Ready and complete any combination of two courses or virtual events between January 1, 2024 and June 28, 2024.

Application deadline: June 28, 2024

Grant Amount: \$10,000

[Click here](#) for more information.

Intuit QuickBooks Small Business Grant Program - Intuit QuickBooks is awarding 20 business owners across the U.S. with \$10,000 in grant funding and 3 months of coaching to help run and grow their business.

Application deadline: June 30, 2024

Grant Amount: \$10,000

[Click here](#) for more information.

Fast Break for Small Business Grants - Legal Zoom has partnered with the NBA, WNBA, and NBA G League to offer \$3 million in grant funding and services to small business owners and emerging entrepreneurs. The program aims to assist business owners with the tools and resources they need to start and grow their businesses. Apply today for your chance at a \$10,000 small business grant and/or up to \$500 in LegalZoom products and services.

Application deadline: September 13, 2024

Grant Amount: Up to \$10,000

[Click here](#) for more information.

June 21-23: St. Johns Avenue Closure Between Central Avenue and Park Avenue

Taste of Highland Park is happening Friday & Saturday of this week. In order to accommodate patrons at the event St. Johns Avenue will be closed between Central and Park Aves beginning at 10 AM on Friday, June 21st reopening at approximately 12:01AM on Sunday, June 23. Access to Park Ave from Elm Place will remain open during the street closure.

June 25: Temporary Water Shut-off Along Old Skokie Road

As a part of Phase II of the Briergate Crossing Business Improvement Project along Old Skokie Road, a water shut-off will be implemented from 12 PM – 6 PM throughout the northern section of the district on Tuesday, June 25. This will facilitate the installation of a fire hydrant on Old Skokie Road. The following addresses on Old Skokie Road are affected:

- 1500
- 1528-1530
- 1540-1542
- 1546-1548
- 1558
- 1564
- 1570
- 1660
- 1672
- 1657-1671

Please visit the City's [Capital Improvement Program page](#) for more information related to the Briergate Crossing Business Improvement Project. If you have any questions about this project, contact Rod Kovilic, City Project Manager, at rkovilic@cityhpil.com or Mike Kowalski, Consultant Engineer for the Ciorba Group at mkowalski@ciorba.com

Central Business District Capital Investment Projects

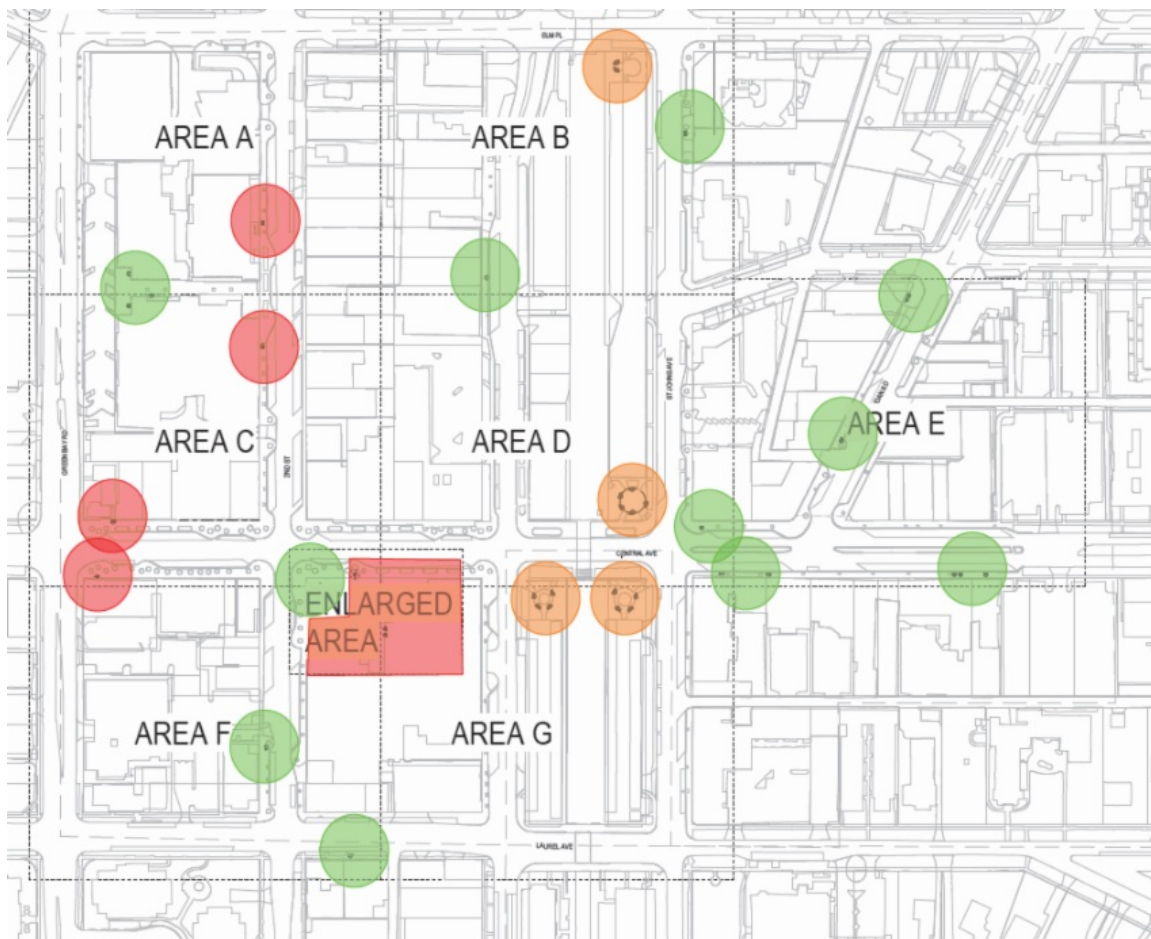
Central Business District (CBD) Capital Improvement Projects continue to revitalize Downtown Highland Park. This year's slate of capital improvements in the CBD represents more than \$6 million in investment in our downtown infrastructure to improve access to businesses, enhance enjoyment of

our outdoor spaces, and promote vibrancy for those who live, work, and visit Highland Park.

These projects include enhancements such as resurfaced streets, expanded outdoor dining and pedestrian areas, and new furniture amenities. Your patience is greatly appreciated while construction is underway.



Downtown Streetscape Furniture Amenity Project Update



Installation of new outdoor furniture throughout the CBD is now underway! Phase 1 of the project, indicated by green dots on the map above, is now complete. 19 new benches have been installed on existing pavers or concrete throughout the CBD.

Phase 2, which includes the installation of new benches in “pocket park” areas indicated in orange on the map will be installed over the next two weeks. These benches require new concrete pads. Additionally during Phase 2, moveable furniture (tables and chairs) will be installed at Port Clinton Square.

Phase 3, anticipated to begin on July 9 and continue through the remainder of

the month, will include installation of benches at Port Clinton and other locations indicated in red on the map, as well as completion of landscaping punch list items.

CBD Resurfacing Project

In addition to refreshed roadways throughout Downtown Highland Park, the CBD Resurfacing Project will provide increased ADA access with updated ramps and new pedestrian signaling. Phase 1 of this project is anticipated to conclude by the end of next week with the completion of underground and foundation work at pedestrian signal posts and bases, as well as curbing and corner paving work.

Phase 2 will begin July 8, and entails roadway asphalt surface removal and replacement along with roadway patching of deficient areas within the project limits. Paving is anticipated to be complete by September. To view a list of impacted streets, visit cityhpil.com/improvements. This project is being conducted primarily during overnight hours to reduce impacts on the business community.

Second Street Improvements Project





Work is well underway on the Second Street corridor between Elm Place and Central Avenue! The removal and replacement of the storm sewer will continue throughout the week as the crew continues south. Installation of curbing and concrete underlayment (pictured above) will be completed by the end of the month. A majority of the pedestrian access pathway is now concrete underlayment. In July, Second Street will see the completion of the underlayment and electrical conduit installation. As this work progresses, brick pavers will begin to be laid. By August, the installation of brick pavers should be complete as well as the installation of the streetscape, including trees, planters, benches, bollards and lights.

The City continues to work with the construction crew to allow for pedestrian access through the use of signs marking pedestrian access points, “businesses open” information, and other directionals. There may be intermediate time periods where access may be limited to complete work in a specific area.

Supporting Second St. Businesses

City staff continues to meet with businesses throughout the district to understand their marketing needs and highlight businesses through the City’s communication modalities. It is important that we continue to support all local Highland Park businesses through communication and supporting local. The City will continue to provide updates as the work progresses.

Please visit the City’s [Capital Improvement Program page](#) for more information related to the Central Business District Capital Projects. If you have any questions specific to the investment projects taking place, please contact Ashley Palbitska, Assistant to the City Manager at 847.926.1034 or apalbitska@cityhpil.com.

Taste of Highland Park at the Lot: June 21-22



Highland Park's premier food and music festival returns with more music, more food, and more fun! The event located at The Lot (525 Central / Enter at St. Johns & Park) returns on Friday, June 21 & Saturday, June 22, from 5 PM - 10 PM.

Internationally-touring platinum artists [Dishwalla](#) and [Spin Doctors](#) headline, globally-recognized [DJ Madrid](#) returns as The Lot's resident DJ, and 13 premier food vendors are ready to satisfy every palate! Attendees will also catch a sneak peek of [Uptown Music Theater Highland Park's](#) upcoming performance of Les Miserables. Best of all, admission to this event is FREE for both days! Best of all, admission to this event is FREE for both days!

On-site vendors will please your taste buds with a vast selection of dishes. From sizzling fajitas to curries bursting with flavor, you'll discover a diverse selection of food options perfect for anyone. Thank you to our featured vendors: [Bella Ru Catering](#), [BWB Shakes](#), [Cafe Dacha](#), [Curt's Café](#), [Indus Progressive Indian Dining](#), [Judy's Pizza](#), [La Taquiza HP](#), [Lynfred Winery](#), [Michael's Grill & Salad Bar](#), [Pixca](#), [Ravinia Brewing Company](#), [Sugarcoated](#), and [Tamales](#).

For more information on how to 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**.

June 20: Diva & Soul Night at Food Truck Thursdays



[Food Truck Thursdays](#) in the Ravinia Business District is bringing strong crowds, good food, and great music to Jens Jensen Park! This week's Diva & Soul Night features Pierce Crask, an Americana Blues solo act, and a later set by RJ Mitchell's Diva Soul, an ensemble of powerhouse singers performing your favorite divas' hits, from Taylor Swift to Celine Dion to Whitney Houston and more.

Featuring over a dozen rotating food trucks and live music, [Food Truck Thursdays](#) will continue weekly through September 26, 4:30 PM til dusk.

If you are interested in participating as a food truck vendor, please contact [Besnidoun USA](#) at: bensidounmarkets@gmail.com.

Highland Park Chamber Seeks Vendors for Annual Sidewalk Sale



On Friday, July 26, and Saturday, July 27, the Highland Park Chamber will host the largest shopping event of the year: [Highland Park Summer Sidewalk Sale](#)! From 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM on both days, businesses will line the sidewalks of the Central Business District with unique and beautiful finds!

The event spotlights many of Highland Park's local shops, vendors, and artists alongside outside vendors. To learn more about the event including costs, sponsorship information, and to sign up as a vendor, [click here](#).

The deadline for vendor registrations is July 1, 2024. Businesses in Highland Park, outside of Highland Park, not-for-profits, and students are welcome.

Tax Deduction for Energy Efficient Businesses

Save both energy and money by applying for the [179D Tax Deduction](#) for energy-efficient commercial buildings. Improve your property's energy efficiency by 25% or more compared to ASHRAE Standard 90.1 (2007) and qualify for substantial tax deductions:

- Earn 50 cents to \$1 per square foot.
- Up to \$5 per square foot with prevailing wage and apprenticeship on labor. Eligible projects include upgrades to building envelope, lighting, HVAC, and hot water systems.
- Eligible entities include warehouses, manufacturing facilities, hotels,

multifamily housing, and tax-exempt organizations.

For details, visit the IRS website: [IRS 179D Tax Deduction](#).

Exterior Improvement Grant Program

The City's [Exterior Improvement Grant Program](#) is designed to provide both assistance and encouragement to commercial property owners as well as sales-tax-generating local businesses citywide. The [Exterior Improvement Grant Program](#) can assist property owners and local businesses with making improvements to their appearance and functionality of their storefronts. 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 and enhance their appeal while lessening 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 Specialist Angela Shaffer at **847.926.1008** or ashaffer@cityhpil.com.

SCORE: Low to No Cost Mentoring & 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.



FOR THE LIFE OF YOUR BUSINESS
NORTH COOK AND LAKE
COUNTY



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:

Business Plan Series – Operations Management Team June 25, 10:00AM CST

Understand the roles and relationships between various business processes by walking through a sequence of steps to design and build an integrated operations model.

[Reserve your spot.](#)

Taking the Mystery Out of Business Insurance June 25, 1:00PM CST

During this workshop, Agent Anna Maria Viti-Welch of The VITI Companies will help participants cut through the confusion and mystery of understanding business insurance.

[Reserve your spot.](#)

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 assistance in Spanish. If you need help finding an SBDC that provides Spanish assistance, please contact Diana Alfaro at diana.alfaro@illinois.gov.

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 the Business Development Team:

- Manager, Carolyn Hersch at chersch@cityhpil.com or 847.926.1027
- Specialist, Corey Cohn at ccohn@cityhpil.com or 847.926.1046
- Specialist, Angela Shaffer at ashaffer@cityhpil.com or 847.926.1008

To learn more about the [Business Development Economic Advisory Group \(BEDAG\)](#), which supports community programs that promote City business and economic development, visit the City's [website](#).

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 Business Development Center](#)

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