

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Lake Forest Obtains Millions of Dollars in Grants to Help Invest in Infrastructure

Lake Forest, Illinois – The City of Lake Forest has received \$17.5 million in grants in the last five years to improve infrastructure and to bring important equipment to various departments.

The 33 grants – some of which exceed \$3 million – emphasize the City’s commitment to being fiscally responsible by bringing in outside money to lower local costs.

“The Mayor and City Council’s top priority is to maintain a sound financial position for the City and these grants are crucial to achieving that,” Mayor Stanford Tack said. “Some important projects wouldn’t be able to move forward without this essential funding.”

Projects that have benefited and will benefit from grants include:

- ***The Burr Oak Area Storm Sewer Improvement Project*** (\$2.75 million grant). The project helped reduce flooding by increasing storm sewer capacity and installing an underground stormwater detention system called a StormTrap. Watch the project construction video at [YouTube.com/EnjoyLakeForest](https://www.youtube.com/EnjoyLakeForest).
- ***Waukegan Road and Everett Road Intersection Improvements*** (\$3.1 million grant). The proposed intersection improvements include providing additional turn lane storage, a barrier median across the Metra railroad tracks, addition of a dedicated southbound to westbound right turn lane and more.
- ***Deerpath Streetscape Improvement Project*** (\$2 million grant). This project will span the stretch of Deerpath Road from Oakwood Avenue to the west to Western Avenue on the east. Infrastructure improvements include improved sidewalks and crossings, street resurfacing, lighting, watermain replacement and landscaping enhancements.
- The ***Fire Department*** has purchased breathing apparatuses and the ***Police Department*** has purchased bulletproof vests and canine unit support using grant funding.

City staff members work diligently on the grant applications and prioritize the ones the City is likely to obtain, a testament to their dedication of being careful stewards of public funds.

“The proposed improvements at Waukegan Road and Everett Road will greatly benefit residents,” Superintendent of the Engineering Byron Kutz said. “It will increase the traffic flow and safety at this intersection by widening the roadway, constructing dedicated left- and right-turn lanes and adding pedestrian signals, crosswalks, sidewalks, and ADA-accessible curb ramps.”

In 2021, the City hired The Ferguson Group of Washington, D.C. to help procure more grants. The firm has in-depth knowledge of federal grants that may be available to cities as well as other ones. The Waukegan/Everett intersection project was one such grant.

“We have definitely increased the grants we have received since The Ferguson Group became involved,” said Diane Hall, Assistant Finance Director, who noted 18 applications for grants were developed last year.

In the current fiscal year that extends through April 30, 2024, the City plans to spend about \$32 million in capital improvement projects – money that would have been significantly lower without the support of grants.

About the City of Lake Forest

With highly rated schools, a historic downtown, and a beautiful beach, the City of Lake Forest appeals to everybody from young families to retired residents. Learn more at cityoflakeforest.com.

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Crews install a StormTrap underground detention vault for the Burr Oak Area Storm Sewer Improvement Project in Lake Forest, Illinois. The project was partially funded by a \$2.75 million grant from the Lake County Stormwater Management Commission (SMC) and the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO).

Photo courtesy of DroNation.