

# Calumet City

"LOVE THIS PLACE"

REVIEW  
Winter 2020/2021

## HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

### MAYOR

Michelle Markiewicz Qualkinbush

### CITY CLERK

Nyota T. Figgs

### CITY TREASURER

Gerald Tarka

### CITY COUNCIL

#### 1ST WARD ALDERMAN

Michael Navarrete

#### 2ND WARD ALDERMAN

Mary Beth Swibes

#### 3RD WARD ALDERMAN

DeAndre Tillman

#### 4TH WARD ALDERMAN

Ramonde D. Williams

#### 5TH WARD ALDERMAN

DeJuan Gardner

#### 6TH WARD ALDERMAN

James Patton

#### 7TH WARD ALDERMAN

Anthony Smith



*Here's to 2021,  
All In — All Done*

## Mayor's Message 2021

As with our nation and region, Calumet City has experienced the coronavirus through losses of residents and loved ones, as well as the loss of businesses and jobs. We are, indeed, saddened. We've experienced unrest due to the senseless killing of George Floyd, and others as we grapple with systemic racism across our nation. But we are resilient! We are tough! We are family! And we are strong!



We have empathized with our neighbors; we support our businesses fighting to get through these trying times. As I write this, 2020 is nearly behind us and we look forward to 2021 with great hope and realistic aspirations.

Calumet City continues to take significant steps to transform and revitalize our community and build off the foundation of past successes. We have well-established, hard-earned funding partnerships and technical support from professional agencies and government entities to fuel our journey into 2021 and beyond. Trust is built over time and performance.

Throughout this newsletter please note the City's main commitments: jobs, investment, and quality of life. Last month we cut the ribbon on a \$1.2 million pump station upgrade that will keep up with the heaviest of rains. 75% of the cost was paid for through a funding partnership with the Army Corps of Engineers. We begin the New Year with several new startups as well:

- Blues Water Run Canoe & Kayak Launch is a \$2.4 million 15-acre state of the art facility that includes a music and entertainment amphitheater, a dog park, river walk, biking trails and more. State grant funding from 3 programs will cover nearly all the cost of spring 2021 construction.
- The \$4.2 million Riverside Drive Industrial Park redevelopment opens 30-40 acres of manufacturing land for job creation and expansion of existing business—100% of construction is being covered by federal and county grants.
- “Wilder Fields”, an indoor vertical farm, has moved on from Chicago and coming to Calumet City to invest \$4 million dollars into our former Target store on East West Road. Wilder Farms will provide vegetables to Chicago-area stores and restaurants. Local residents will also be able to buy fresh vegetables grown in-doors year-round. Construction is underway and will take place in two phases.



*Mayor Michelle loves her reindeer.*

- With Phase 1 surveying completed with the assistance of a Cook County grant, the City moves into Phase 2 of the widening and resurfacing of Dolton-State Street from State Line Road to I-94. More than \$3 million in federal funding already has been pledged towards that construction. The end goal is a full four-way interchange at Dolton Road and I-94.

Other pages of this newsletter will illustrate the City’s utilization of professional planning and grant development to:

- Expand industrial opportunities
- Improve streets, sidewalks and lighting
- Demolish blighted buildings
- Provide incentives for existing business expansion and new business development

As always, the City continues to invest in new technologies and best practices in our police and fire departments as they continue to stand as the best in the region – keeping our community safe. Please remember all of our first-responders and essential workers, who continue to deliver services under extraordinary circumstances to keep us healthy and safe, as well. Happy Holidays!

*Mayor Michelle Markiewicz Qualkinbush*



Christmas 2019.

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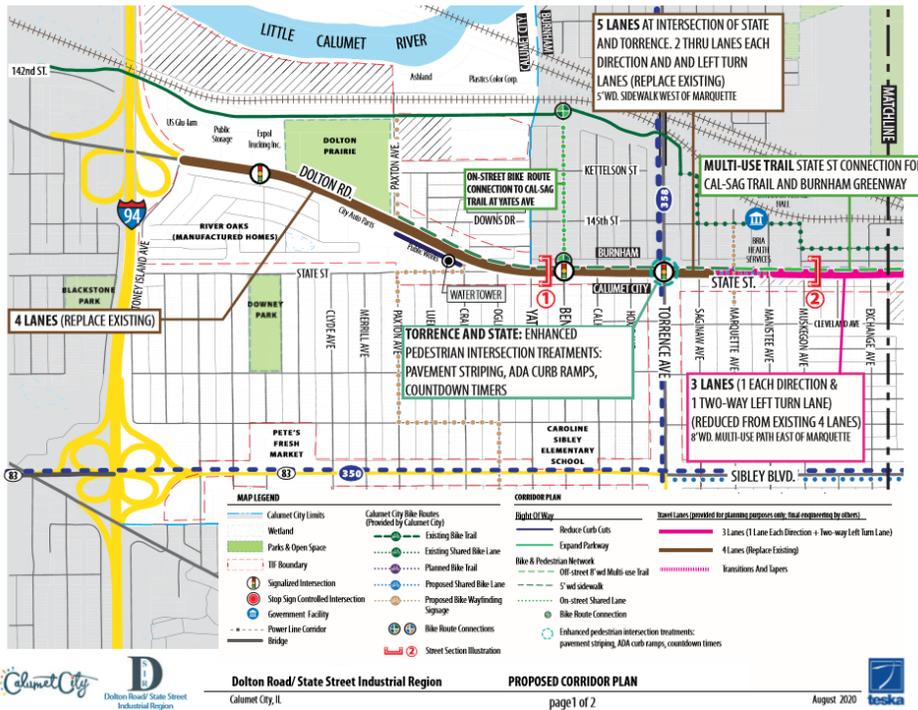
[www.calumetcity.org](http://www.calumetcity.org)

[www.facebook.com/cityofcalumetcity](https://www.facebook.com/cityofcalumetcity)

City Hall: 708-891-8100



# What is DSIR Revitalization? A Vibrancy of Our Community Character



Calumet City is pursuing a corridor plan for the Dolton Road/State Street Industrial Corridor (DSIR) that is reflective of business vibrancy and community character. Spanning nearly three miles between Interstate 94 and State Line Road in Illinois, the DSIR Corridor serves some of the region’s most successful industrial businesses, single-family and multi-family residences, commercial businesses and Forest Preserve open spaces. The overall purpose of this corridor study is to make recommendations for roadway and right-of-way improvements to best serve the growing business community of the Dolton Road/State Street Industrial Corridor. The goal of the study is to recommend solutions for a safe and efficient truck route while also meeting the community’s goals of improving access to regional bike trails and enhancing the overall character of the corridor. The corridor traverses through the City of Calumet City and the Village of Burnham. As such, coordination between communities is critical towards development of Dolton Road/State Street as a vibrant mixed-use corridor with regional connections to the market and natural open spaces.



## Congratulations Hasse Construction, 100 Years in the Community!



Hasse Construction’s Repair Shop & Yard has been in Calumet City’s DSIR area since 1920 providing jobs and opportunity. The company moved its business office to Calumet City in 1956. Hasse Construction is an award winning 4th generation construction company serving Calumet City and the Midwest region. The right partner for commercial, underground utilities/municipalities, transportation, institutional, industrial or healthcare construction.

**2020 - Industrial Contractor / Public Project / Industrial Project Awards**

## See a Glimpse of the Future Burnham Avenue Corridor

The Burnham Avenue corridor plan extends from State Street to the North and Michigan City Road to the South, with a focus on the intersections at Sibley Boulevard, Memorial Drive and Pulaski Road. Burnham Avenue was once a thriving commercial corridor for Calumet City, and remains a principal arterial road through the city and a primary route to the South Shore Line station located at Burnham Avenue and Brainard Avenue to the north. As other auto-centric corridors developed in the city and surrounding communities, Burnham Avenue has declined and lost the vitality it once had. Through a participatory planning process, the Great Cities Institute collected community members' vision and ideas for revitalization of the corridor. As identified by Alderman Michael Navarrete, Memorial Drive has the potential to be a strong cultural corridor anchored by Burnham Avenue, Memorial Park and two public schools at the East and West ends of the Memorial Drive corridor. The intersection of Burnham Avenue and Memorial Drive presents an opportunity to develop a community hub, and spur the revitalization of a pedestrian-friendly commercial corridor along Burnham. This plan presents the community's vision and a framework for the City's leadership to guide future land use, economic development policy, and infrastructure investment along the Burnham Avenue corridor.



## Using “Complete Streets” to Enhance Quality of Life, Make Community Safer

Complete Streets are streets for everyone. They are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities. Complete Streets make it easy to cross the street, walk to shops, and bicycle to work or just for recreation. They allow buses to run on time and make it safe for people to walk to and from train stations. The City of Calumet City has a Complete Streets policy which means we have enhanced our approach to community roads and work with regional transportation agency planning programs to help improve quality of life in the realm of transportation. By adopting a Complete Streets policy, Calumet City has directed its engineers to routinely design and operate the entire right of way to enable safe access for all users - regardless of age, ability, or mode of transportation. This means that every transportation project will make the street network better and safer for drivers, transit users, pedestrians, and bicyclists – making our town a better place to live.

The City administration has established an internal Complete Streets Committee of professionals to ensure that those making travel choices are convenient, attractive, and by safe means – where people do not need to rely solely on automobiles. The City is working on Complete Streets programming whereby residents can replace congestion-clogged trips in their cars with swift bus rides or heart-healthy bicycle trips. Getting more productivity out of the existing road and public transportation systems is vital to reducing congestion

– and improving quality of life.

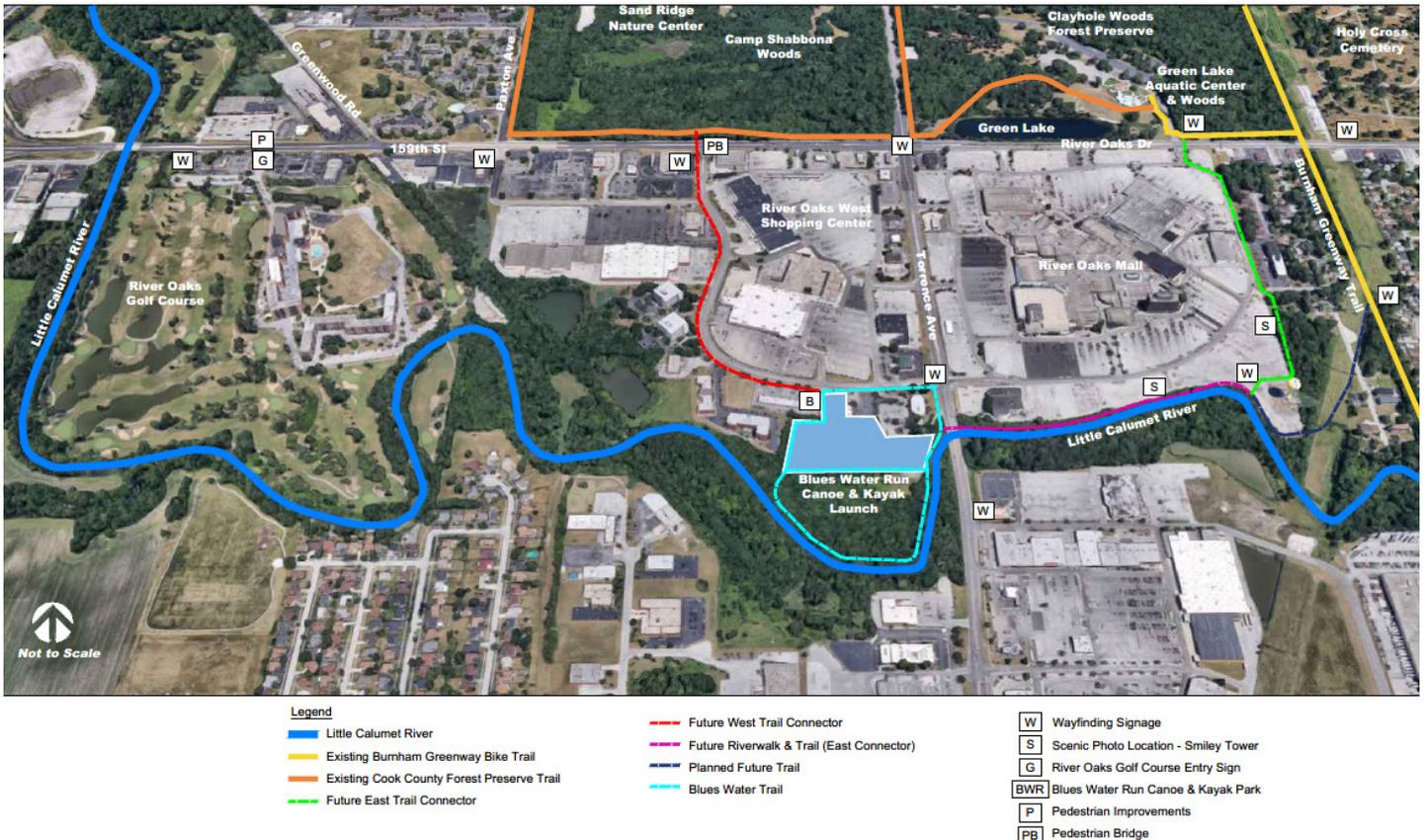
Complete Streets reduce motor vehicle-related crashes and pedestrian risk, as well as bicyclist risk when well-designed bicycle-specific infrastructure is included. Complete Streets can promote walking and bicycling by providing safer places to achieve physical activity through transportation.

Trails are an important part of pedestrian facilities. The Complete Streets Committee recently reviewed the requirements for the Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program (ITEP), which is providing more than \$100 million statewide for bicycle and pedestrian facilities. The committee organized a public outreach meeting, which was held in the Public Safety Training Center, 24 State Street, with proper social distancing measures, on September 4. Besides members of the committee, six people who work in the city attended and gave feedback on trail projects that will be submitted to this grant program. They were very happy that the city was having this outreach meeting and were excited about how those trails and Blues Water Run could complement each other.

The City also sent out a survey, prepared by a Community and Economic Development intern, to more than 130 email addresses of local businesses to gather the business community’s thoughts on the needs for more pedestrian and bicycle options. The survey received 27 responses. The results were included in the City’s ITEP applications at the end of October.



## Connecting Bike, Pedestrian Paths for the Future



## Cook County Forest Preserve to Fund Study for Pedestrian Bridge

Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle has approved a \$25 million funding initiative for the Forest Preserve District. Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle has approved plan to use the money on various maintenance projects and to assess the feasibility of installing a bike-pedestrian bridge over Torrence Avenue in Calumet City. The proposed bridge would connect and provide safe crossings from Camp Shabbona Woods on the west to Green Lake Family Aquatic Center on the east and the network of nearby trails. The Cook County Forest Preserves is one of the oldest and largest in the

nation, with about 62 million visits a year. It's a collection of nearly 70,000 acres of natural areas, from wetlands to towering trees.



Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle speaks at podium.

## Indoor Fresh Farming: Healthy Living and Healthy Businesses



*Wilder Fields founder Jake Counne (at podium) stands with Mayor Michelle Markiewicz Qualkinbush (right of podium) and other government officials at a news conference in the in-door farming building on July 15, 2020.*

Residents of Calumet City will soon be able to visit a highly innovative, local business to shop for a healthy dinner. This new business will also create dozens of local jobs. Wilder Fields, an indoor green farming company, has begun building one of the world's largest vertical farms at the 135,000-square-foot site on East-West Road.

**The business is expected to reach its first phase of development in early 2021 and to complete the second phase in early 2023.** This indoor farm will grow a wide selection of vegetables, from arugula to spinach, to lettuce and basil. The special growing methods and technology allow for varieties of unique flavors of

these greens. Wilder Fields will ship its products to supermarkets and restaurants within 100 miles of its location.

This business development will have educational and retail components along with the 24 separate "clean rooms" that will grow many varieties of vegetables. There will also be a research laboratory. The educational component is being designed now and will include partnerships with local schools and universities.

This development will encourage healthy living and healthy eating. It will also continue the revitalization of the River Oaks commercial area.



*An illustration of a finished farm. The farm is expected to be completed in 2023.*



*Wilder Fields founder Jake Counne gives a tour of the in-door farming building on East-West Road at a news conference on July 15, 2020.*

## Blueprint for Jobs and Tax Relief

Calumet City will have to wait a few more months to learn about its bid for a casino license. This casino would mean 1,150 permanent jobs, 1,200 construction jobs, and tax relief - as well as \$275 million investment. The developers for Southland Live Casino in River Oaks Mall submitted an application last year for one of the state's six new casino licenses authorized under Gov. J.B. Pritzker's massive gambling expansion. Initially, a decision on the South Suburban casino license was expected by the end of October 2020. However, the Illinois Gaming Board recently announced a six-month delay.

Our City is a viable candidate for one of those licenses. Illinois' 10 existing gambling meccas have expanded a long way from their riverboat origins nearly three decades ago along Illinois waterways, first docking with lawmakers' blessings and gradually including land. The City's casino proposal includes an entertainment complex that will bring hundreds of millions of dollars to our town. This means added jobs and bigger paying jobs, expanded retail and other businesses, lower property taxes for residents and business owners, and a complete revitalization to our community. The proposed casino will help strengthen our community and improve our economy not only within Calumet City, but the entire south suburban region. It brings job training opportunities and retail synergy to the mall and all retail stores within the community. The proposed location is slated for the parking lot just south of Macy's.

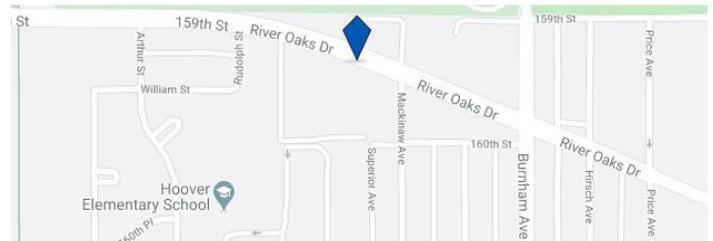


Example photos.

## High Class and Upscale Event Center Picks New Location

*A New Venue Coming to River Oaks Drive – Corridor Continues to Thrive*

The event center will be moved to the former Aronson Furniture/Toys R Us (located at 757 River Oaks Drive) from its original proposed location at the former Circuit City on East West Road. This new location offers additional parking and visibility. The company will be expanding its Orland Park venue to include a Calumet City operation that will offer events for every occasion in our community. If you're planning special gatherings, there is no better place than Chicago – yet there is no better place than close to home – right here in Calumet City. We expect the facility to offer an event venue that delivers an amazing experience you couldn't find anywhere else but at the best places in downtown Chicago. So, plan your weddings, anniversary parties, and other special occasions right here in town. It's coming soon!



Location map and example photo.

### Clerk's Corner

Nyota Figgs, City Clerk, City of Calumet City



**MISSION STATEMENT:**

- To serve as the Clerk to the City Council, Chief Elections Officer of the City of Calumet City and Custodian of the Corporate Seal
- To maintain the Record of the City Council and the City Code of Ordinances
- To provide information to our citizens and refer services to various city departments

**VISION:**

- To enhance services while serving as the nucleus of the City of Calumet City.



The City Clerk's Office is closed to the public, although staff are working to help keep our residents and employees safe during the coronavirus pandemic. A drop box is available on the Wentworth Avenue side of City Hall for emergency use. Residents are asked to make all payments on-line at [www.calumetcity.org](http://www.calumetcity.org), by US mail, or by depositing payments in the drop box. Please direct any questions to the Clerk's office at 708-891-8116.

### Pop-Up Voter Registrations Ward by Ward



City Clerk Figgs hosted seven pop-up events to register voters prior to the November election. Pictured here: City Clerk Figgs, Mayor Michelle, Treasurer Tarka, Alderman Anthony Smith, and Rhonda Haithcox.



Nyota Figgs prepares Thanksgiving meals while wearing protective equipment at TF North High School.

### Hotspot Donations for Calumet City School Districts

City Clerk Nyota Figgs partnered with Meijer and New Faith Baptist Church International to obtain 200 wireless hotspots for distribution to elementary and high school students in Calumet City. On November 8th, plans were announced to distribute the hotspot donations to: Dist. 157/Hoover—Schrum, Dist. 155/Wentworth, Dist. 156/Lincoln Elementary School, Dist. 149/Dolton Calumet Memorial Park District, and Dist. 215/Thornton Fractional HS. Residents can contact their school districts for more information.



**Tarka Talks Finance** *Gerald A. Tarka, Treasurer, City of Calumet City*

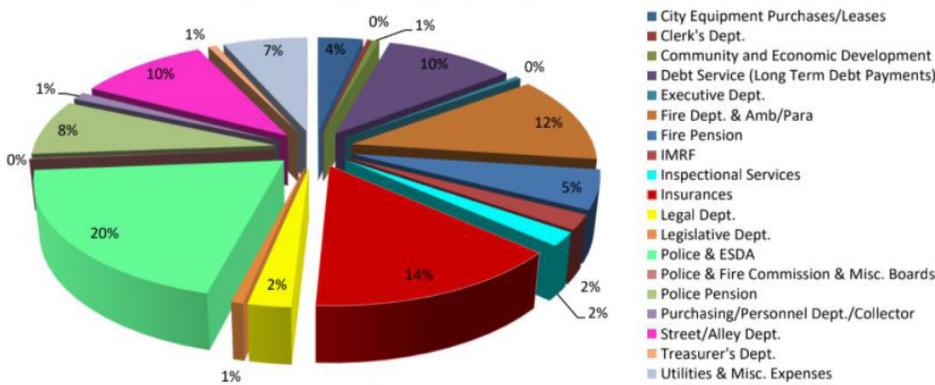
As your Treasurer, I take very seriously the trust that you, the residents have put in me. I will never take that trust or the responsibilities of my office lightly. During this current global economic slowdown, I pledge to do everything in my power to facilitate the continued smooth operation of your municipal government and to keep the Administration and the City Council informed as to the status of the City's finances so that they can make responsible decisions on spending and budgeting.



**Treasure Tarka's Treasurer's Truths**

- The pie chart provides the expense by category for all governmental funds of the City for fiscal year 2020.
- 45% of the City's overall budget is dedicated to our public safety.
- That means \$0.45 of every dollar spent by the City is for police, fire ESDA and their respective pensions.
- The City's operating budget has not had a real estate tax increase for the past 4 years.
- The City's Administration is currently operating under a balanced budget this year and has done so for the past 8 years.

**Expense by Category May 2019 to April 2020**



**Fiscal Year 2020**

Expense Category	Amount	%
City Equipment Purchases/Leases	\$ 1,917,890	4%
Clerk's Dept.	\$ 177,592	0%
Community and Economic Development	\$ 313,306	1%
Debt Service (Long Term Debt Payments)	\$ 5,544,952	10%
Executive Dept.	\$ 258,510	0%
Fire Dept. & Amb/Para	\$ 6,611,633	12%
Fire Pension	\$ 2,971,246	5%
IMRF	\$ 1,139,214	2%
Inspectional Services	\$ 1,037,476	2%
Insurances	\$ 7,862,284	14%
Legal Dept.	\$ 1,312,130	2%
Legislative Dept.	\$ 362,447	1%
Police & ESDA	\$ 10,791,676	20%
Police & Fire Commission & Misc. Boards	\$ 58,934	0%
Police Pension	\$ 4,246,395	8%
Purchasing/Personnel Dept./Collector	\$ 601,357	1%
Street/Alley Dept.	\$ 5,516,592	10%
Treasurer's Dept.	\$ 362,169	1%
Utilities & Misc. Expenses	\$ 3,592,850	7%
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$ 54,678,654</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Electrical Aggregation**

The City of Calumet City's Electrical Aggregation Program is with Illinois-based Dynegy Energy Services at the fixed rate of 7.058 per kWh through October 2021. Please be aware that Dynegy Energy or the City of Calumet City will never come to your door or will never call you on the phone unless you initiate a call to us. **DON'T BE SCAMMED!** Never give your ComEd bill to anyone at your door. Never tell anyone your ComEd account number! Call police if you think you are being scammed.

## Blues Water Run to Bring Fun for All Ages, \$2.3 Million Investment

Get ready for a time of family fun for children, parents, grandparents and even dogs at a new riverwalk and outdoor recreation wonderland along the Little Calumet River. The state-of-the-art 15-acre Blues Water Run will offer activities for many occasions and interests, including paddling, enjoying music, fishing, picnicking and exploring regional trails.

Pre-construction activities are well underway as construction is expected to begin spring 2021. The park is slated to open by late summer/early fall 2021.

The development will feature a canoe and kayak launch, an amphitheater, a riverwalk, a dog park, a disc golf course, a picnic shelter (picnic permit information to come) and more - including a walking path and bike trail that will connect with regional trails throughout the southland.

This development will be paid with a \$1.4 million grant from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity through its Rebuild Illinois Fast-Track Public Infrastructure program and \$480,000 from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources through its Boat Access Area Development and Open Lands Acquisition and Development grant programs.

The location in the middle of the River Oaks commercial area will mean additional consumers coming to local businesses and opportunities onsite for community events. Plans call for connections to trails of the Cook County Forest Preserve, including the Burnham Greenway.

Students will be able to use an educational app to learn about natural features at the park.

Calumet City has already begun preliminary engineering for this park. This park will spur community and economic development with its proximity to homes and businesses and the prospect of drawing visitors from Calumet City and from across the region. This will mean more foot traffic by River Oaks Mall.



## City Obtains Millions in Federal Grant for Riverside Dr. Development

The City of Calumet City received the first multi-million-dollar grant from the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) for the Cook County region within more than a decade. This nearly \$3.4 million grant will be part of a \$5 million development for infrastructure improvements at Riverside Drive Industrial Park.

The project is expected to bring more than \$13 million in private development and over 100 highly-skilled manufacturing and industrial jobs to this area of more than 50 acres. Industrial taxpaying properties will bring value to all residents by

significantly lowering property taxes on homes in Calumet City.

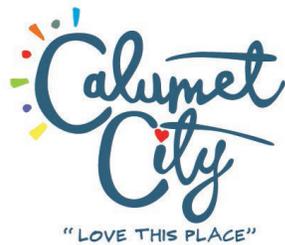
The City's Department of Community and Economic Development worked with the EDA for nearly two years to make this investment possible. Washington D.C. sent out executives from the Department of Commerce to deliver the grant news in person. For comparison, this grant equals more than 24 percent of all that the EDA gave to projects in the State of Illinois in 2018.

Mayor Michelle spoke before the Cook County Board of Commissioners

Finance Committee to secure additional funding for the project as well. The Board of Commissioners is considering another \$844,000 to help fund the project.



*Joel Frushone, director of the Office of External Affairs at the U.S. Economic Development Administration, speaks.*



## Take Another Look at the Calumet City App

Channel your inner "Love this Place" by getting the most out of your City services. Did you know you live in a town of nearly 37,000 residents that was founded in 1893? Technology has come a long way since the 1800s of course! There is an easy way to obtain information about the City by utilizing the City's app. The official City iPhone App is your portal to learn more about the community, contact staff and elected officials, report service needs, and staying up to date on important City information. The City's mobile App will help connect and interact with residents and businesses, making it a valuable tool for communication.



## City Builds Research Partnership with Housing Study

The City enlisted the work of a Purdue University Northwest economics class in the fall to study the significant problem of vacant houses, and representatives of the City's Community and Economic Development Department attended the students' presentation of their findings in December.

The City remains greatly concerned about the number of vacant houses, many left behind from the 2008 housing and financial crisis. Besides what these vacancies mean for quality of neighborhoods, they can have a compounding effect on the local housing market and on City finances.

The City continues to foster partnerships with local universities, and City staff members were very interested to discover a Purdue University Northwest class, Economics 32200: Public Finance & Public Policy, was working with municipal governments on research projects.

Several students who had made significant contributions to this study put together a presentation and delivered it on Dec. 12, 2019. These class leaders were Taylor Kroon, Leon Kah, James Gross, Moritz Gisy and Elizabeth Huston.

These students put together a heat map of vacant properties within the designated study area, north of Michigan City Road and east of Freeland Avenue. This area was chosen as the focus because of the large number of vacancies there. The densest concentration was shown to be close to 154th Street and Wentworth Avenue – in other words, very close to City Hall.

A key factor in house values is whether there are vacancies on the same block as the house for sale. The students showed that there is an average of 0.38 vacancies on the same block as another vacant house in the study area.

Among their recommendations were these: Public



investments in such things as streetscape improvements and greening with new trees; tracking and maintaining properties with a system like ProChamps; demolishing blighted property; creating a development node in the "South City Center"; private investment encouraged by tax incentives and low-interest loans; stricter code enforcement against unhealthy or unattractive upkeep; and partnerships with non-profits, colleges, trade schools or community groups to provide cleanups, landscaping and repairs, perhaps through internship programs.

The students also explained that there are financing sources for these types of programs, and there are also case studies that show success. The students emphasized the value of land banks, which the City has focused on in the months since. Further developments in the City's approach to abandoned housing are detailed in the article on work with the South Suburban Land Bank Development Authority and demolition.

The City is discussing project ideas with the instructor of the Purdue Northwest class for another research project in fall 2020.



*Students Elizabeth Huston, Taylor Kroon, Leon Kah, James Gross and Moritz Gisy give a presentation on housing policy for the Economics 32200 (Public Finance and Public Policy) class at Purdue University Northwest (PNW) in December 2019. This presentation was attended by staff from the City of Calumet City Department of Community and Economic Development and by PNW professors, including class instructor Dr. Amlan Mitra.*

## City and Land Bank Housing Initiative to Reduce Vacant Homes

Calumet City began a new initiative this summer to address vacant and abandoned properties in partnership with the South Suburban Land Bank Development Authority. The City has been working on acquiring 25 residential properties which have been abandoned and the property taxes have been delinquent for more than two years.

In spring 2020, after the City began looking into options for working with the land bank, Brenton Boitse, a Community and Economic Development intern from the City's partnership with the University of Illinois at Chicago, created a report on 39 apparently abandoned properties and their tax payment status and availability for redevelopment. Among his recommendations were demolition for some properties and considering demolition for others, as well as seeking to diversify the City's housing portfolio.

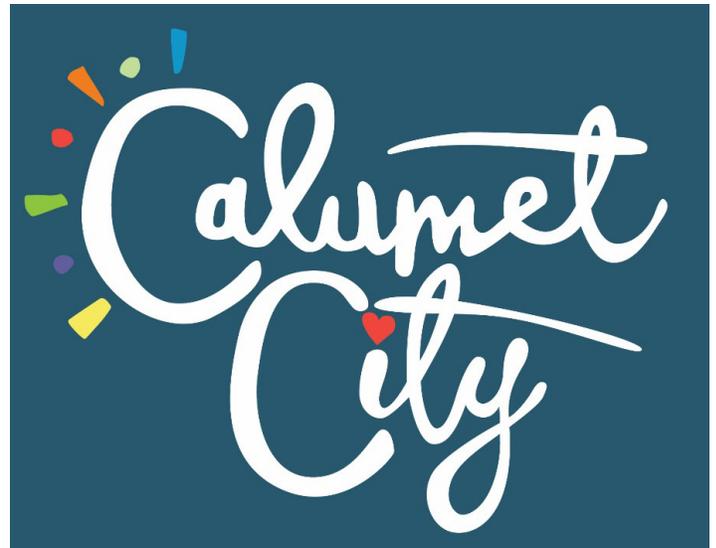
The South Suburban Land Bank began work on acquiring these properties at the direction of the City. The Land Bank moves forward on this process through the Cook County Court called abandonment. Abandonment occurs when the property is vacant by the owner, property taxes are unpaid and/or water is not in service for at least two years.

After the South Suburban Land Bank has acquired these properties, the bank will immediately begin routine maintenance on them at no cost to the City. Any mortgages, liens, property taxes are eliminated through the abandonment process and the properties are now free and clear. They will secure them, mow grass and ensure that they are listed in their inventories for sale. All of this costs Calumet City nothing. This is all paid for through

the South Suburban Land Bank.

In addition to the City's partnership with the Land Bank, there were several homes that the City identified for immediate demolition as they were abandoned and posed serious safety concerns to the City. Most of these properties had been evaluated by the Land Bank for acquisition, but the conditions of the properties had been deemed too poor for rehabilitation.

The goals of the City's initiative are to work with the Land Bank to identify buyers who are wanting to rehabilitate these homes after acquisition and get them filled with owners. To assist the City's goal, Calumet City secured grant money to offer down payment assistance for buyers. The process of acquiring these properties generally can take up to six months through abandonment. Any owners who wish to contest the abandonment may do so, but the City will require the owner to bring the property up to City Code and to pay the delinquent property taxes.



SSLBDA  
SOUTH SUBURBAN LAND BANK  
and DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

*A partnership to facilitate the redevelopment of acquired properties that will improve quality of life, stabilize the tax base, and enhance economies activities.*

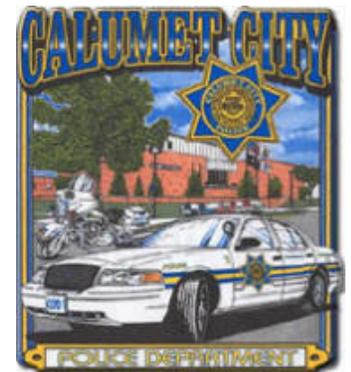
## New Policing Initiatives & New Policing Innovations for the Future

In America today, there are just about 18,000 local, state and federal police agencies. These agencies are responsible for employing over 680,000 full time officers and that breaks down to about 3 officers for every 1,000 people in the United States. According to FBI statistics, these officers arrest over 10 million people a year. With statistics like that, it's clear that these community servants are doing an impressive job at keeping the peace – as well noted with the job that Calumet City police officers perform daily. Our police officers play a very important role in our neighborhoods. Ever since the inception of the first police department in the 1800s, the goal has always been to promote public safety and to uphold the rule of law. As a result, our public safety personnel seek trust between law enforcement and our community which is essential in furthering the goal of living in a safe environment. The most common strategy that officers use is known as community policing. Community policing leverages the relationships created between members of the community and officers who work closely to solve problems.

As for Calumet City, our police department hosted a meeting on March 4th with the Cook County Sheriff's department. This meeting was attended by Leo Schmitz, Chief of Public Safety in the Cook County Sheriff's Department; and Marlon Parks, who is the First Deputy of the Cook County Sheriff's Department. Also, in attendance were over 60 Police Chiefs, Deputy Police Chiefs, and other personnel from public safety agencies who serve the south suburban region. It was at this meeting that they revealed the creation of the Suburban Cook Intelligence Initiative (SCII). The SCII will give law enforcement agencies (located in South Suburban Communities) the ability to gather and share information with one another. This form of policing is known as Intelligence-led policing, and it revolves around the assessment and management of risk. Intelligence-led policing started to gain momentum in the 1970's, and following the events of 9/11, adoption of these types of strategies skyrocketed. So, with Calumet City beginning the adoption of these new policing strategies, it's set to lead our police department into the future.



*Leo Schmitz, Chief of Public Safety, Cook County*



*Marlon Parks, First Deputy Sheriff, of Cook County*

## Holiday Safety Tips

With the holidays quickly approaching, the Calumet City Police Department would like to share tips that can help keep you stay safe during the busy shopping season.

- Park in a well lit area. Avoid spaces where the lights are burnt out or there is no lighting.
- Park as close to the entrance of the store as possible, especially in the evening time.
- Do not leave your vehicle running unattended, even if it is just to warm up your car.
- Ensure that you lock your vehicle and store your valuables out of plain sight while you are shopping. Leaving these items in the open will draw attention to your car.
- If you are shopping with children, be sure to have a plan in place in the event you are separated while shopping. Be sure to decide on where you will meet and what time before you begin any of your shopping. Remind your children to call you if something is wrong or to notify store or mall security if they are in need of help.
- If you plan on purchasing items from people on the internet, ask that they meet you in a well lit public place where there will be other people around. The Calumet City Police Department, (1200 Pulaski Rd) is a designated Internet Exchange Safe Zone.
- Do not purchase items from people selling out of their car or in the parking lot.
- As always, never drink and drive. Be sure to pay close attention to other drivers on the roadway this holiday season.

For police service or to report a crime, please contact the Calumet City Police Department.

EMERGENCY 911

Non-Emergency 708-868-2500

Anonymous Tip Line 708-891-STOP(7867)

Have a Happy & Safe Holiday Season  
Christopher Fletcher  
Chief of Police



# New Firefighters Come on Board, Continue the Legacy of Firefighting

Fire departments and firefighters are an integral part of our society. They are responsible for providing an essential service to our communities and neighborhoods and it would be impossible to live without them. The Roman Emperor Augustus is credited with developing the first firefighting brigade. At this time, all of those who were involved in firefighting were ex-slaves who also served as watchmen during the night. Tools used at this time consisted of hooks, water buckets, pickaxes, ladders, ropes, and even water pumps which could impressively reach heights up to 30 meters. These brigades were incredibly successful at their jobs, and because of that, the idea of firefighting spread around the world.

Over the past 2000 years, firefighting has become an absolute necessity. We heavily rely on these brave men and women to carry out their duties, because without them, our communities would be unable to function. In 2017, there were over 1.3 million reported fires in the United States alone. This resulted in the death of 3,400 people which is about a 10% increase from 2008. These fires were also responsible for almost 15,000 injuries and \$23 billion in property damages. So, what is Calumet City doing to combat these ever-worrying statistics? Our firefighters are

the best trained, have the best equipment, and set the example for the region. And, if you've recently visited the City's website, you may have noticed the Department was accepting applications for new firefighting positions. Earlier this year, the City received applications for this great opportunity to serve our community. In order to qualify, applicants needed to meet a list of minimum requirements: U S citizenship, valid driver's license, between 21 and 35 years of age, no felony arrests, Illinois certified paramedic, and possessing a current CPAT card with ladder certification. These requirements ensured that Calumet City were hiring candidates that were properly certified to perform duties as a firefighter.

Now that the application deadline has come and gone, the City has moved forward with hiring three new firefighters. They completed their 7-week program at the Illinois Fire Service Institute in Champaign, Illinois. It's there they trained how to firefight properly and learn the skills needed to have successful careers – and to ensure our community is protected. They returned from these courses as proud Calumet City firefighters and went right to work. These individuals will make a great addition to the City's Fire Department as they look forward to serving and protecting our neighborhoods.



## \$1.2 Million Yates Retention Pond Project Completed

Mayor Michelle, Congresswoman Robin Kelly and Colonel Paul Culberson, US Army Corps of Engineers, cut a ribbon today signifying the completion of the \$1.2 million Yates Retention Pond upgrade project. The project, located entirely within the area of Yates Pond pump station, included replacing two existing turbine pumps and one submersible pump, installing access hatches, replacing float switches and existing generators, installing a control system, site improvements, and removing old obsolete equipment.

75% of the project cost was paid for by a grant from the US Army Corps of Engineers. The remaining 25% or \$358,281.25 was Calumet City's required match. The contractor on the project was Industria, Inc., a veteran owned business.

Thank you, Congresswoman Kelly and the US Army Corps of Engineers!

Congresswoman Kelly congratulated Mayor Michelle and her staff for the hard work and dedication to the residents of Calumet City.



*Congresswoman Robin Kelley Speaks to Attendees.*

## Proud Families! Proud High School! Proud Community!

Thornton Fractional North High School 2019-2020 WRESTLING TEAM includes teammates: Bilal Bailey, Nasir Bailey, Sincere Bailey, Kenyon Boyce, David Green, Alex Jackson, Donte Reed, Trevor Reed, and Donovan Rheams, under the outstanding leadership of Coaches, Timothy Springs, Justin Viau and James Newell. The team celebrated an impressive season of accomplishments which includes: Fenton Invitational Team Champions, Geneseo Invitational team Champions, 2nd place in SSC Conference, 2nd place in IHSA Regional, 9 sectional Qualifiers (most in school history), 7 state Qualifiers (most in school history) and finished with a 19-2 record which was the best in school history.

The Wrestling Team had many outstanding individual accomplishments including: Trevor Reed

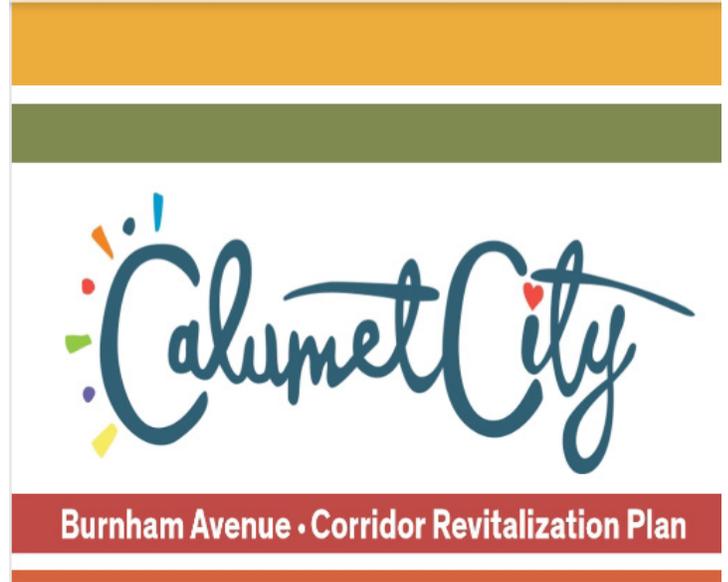
(106lbs) placed 5th in the State; Nasir Bailey (120lbs) 2A State Champion; Kenyon Boyce (126lbs) State Qualifier; Donovan Rheams (138lbs) State Qualifier; Sincere Bailey (145lbs) 2A State Champion; Alex Jackson (152lbs) Sectional Qualifier (state alternate); Bilal Bailey (160lbs) 2A State Champion; David Green (170lbs) Sectional Qualifier (state alternative) and Donte Reed (195lbs) State Qualifier, with Nasir, Sincere and Bilal making State history, City history and TFN history. This is the first time that three brothers have won individual state titles in the same year in the history of the United States.

The Coaching Staff and members of the Wrestling Team have brought honor, distinction, and recognition to the City of Calumet City and deserves the admiration of our entire community.



## Planning for Development

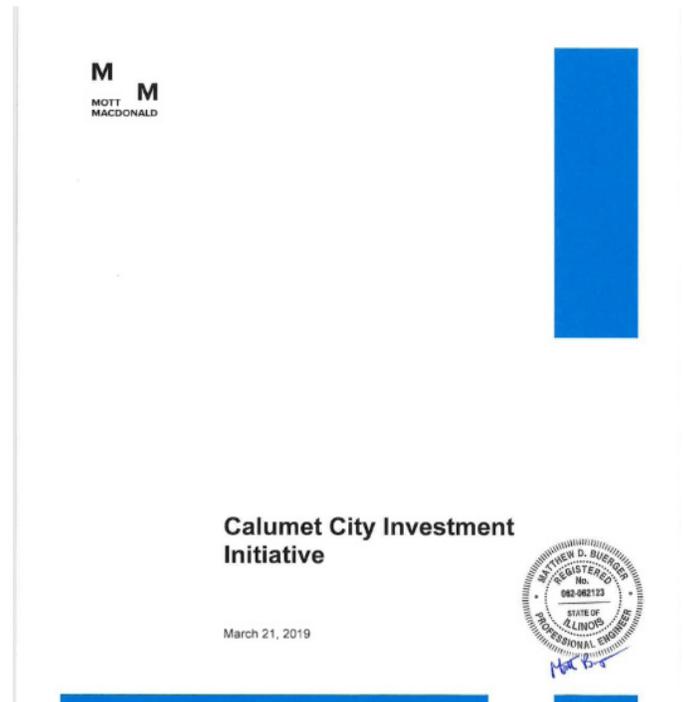
Within the past few years, the City has completed various comprehensive plans including Park Development, DSIR (Dolton Road/State Street Industrial Region), Burnham Corridor, Sibley Corridor, River Oaks TIF, State/Torrence/Sibley TIF, and award winning plans in partnership with the University of Chicago for green infrastructure. These plans were critical for securing funding from state and federal governments as well as providing a road map for economic development. Now, these plans have taken root to move forward with building and development implementation. The City's college internship program assisted with these efforts.



2019 ASLA Student Awards | A Program of the ASLA Fund | American Society of Landscape Architects | LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE MAGAZINE

### Before the City, there was the Sand: Designing a Resilient Calumet TER/RAIN

Honor Award | Student Collaboration



## Sibley Boulevard Corridor Plan, Calumet City

COOK COUNTY  
MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL  
HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN  
VOLUME 2 - Municipal Annexes

Calumet City Annex

FINAL  
July 2019

Prepared for:

Cook County  
Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management  
69 W. Washington St., Suite 2600  
Chicago, Illinois 60602

Toni Preckwinkle  
President  
Cook County Board of Commissioners

William Barnes  
Executive Director  
Cook County Department of Homeland  
Security & Emergency Management

## New Development at Play

There is a new retail franchise slated for the former Walgreens located on the northwest corner of Burnham and River Oaks Drive; Unbeatable Eatables slated for Sibley Boulevard; 79th Street Bar-b-Q proposed for River Oaks Drive; expansion of Napleton/Lincoln Dealership on River Oaks Drive; local “start-your-own business” program proposed for the Huntington Drive Business Park District; scheduled demolition for Huntington Drive abandoned property; and much, much more.

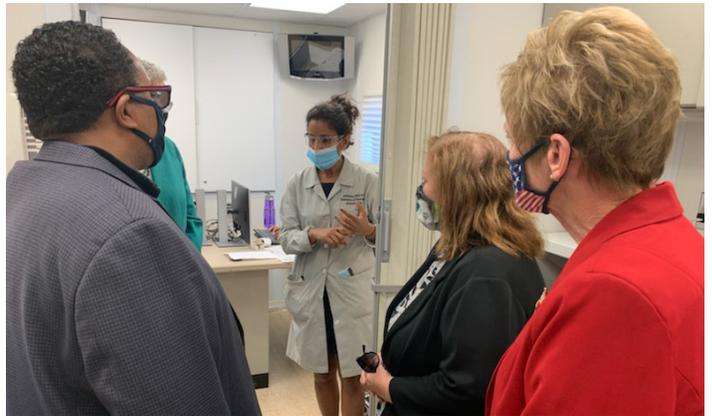
## Cook County Board Visits to Address COVID and Other Health Concerns

Mayor Michelle, Clerk Nyota Figgs, and 7th Ward Alderman Anthony Smith along with Lansing Mayor, Patty Eidam, welcomed Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle and Commissioner Stanley Moore to Calumet City. Calumet City hosted Cook County's Mobile Public Health Team on Oct. 7 and there are plans to host future events as well.

Free COVID-19 tests were administered on-site until 4 p.m. along with free Women's health education and referrals as well as HIV testing, according to Cook County Public Health attending staff Dr. Ashelesha Patel, M.D.

A tour was provided to President Preckwinkle, Mayor Michelle, Mayor Eidam, Clerk Figgs, and Alderman Smith of Cook County's Mobile Response Public Health Trailer, which includes a negative pressure room and other amenities to help medical staff with health care services.

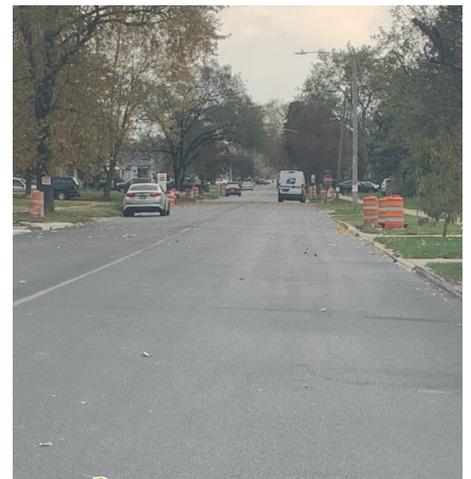
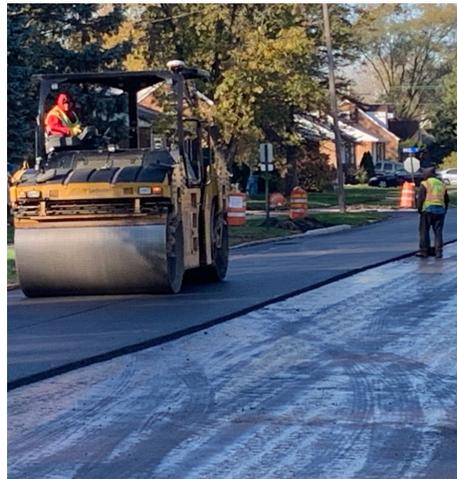
Calumet City wishes to thank Commissioner Stanley Moore and President Preckwinkle for bringing these invaluable services to the residents of Calumet City and Cook County.



## CDBG and "Rebuild" grants provide for Street Resurfacing

Each year, for over 50 years, the City of Calumet City has received Cook County Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding for the purpose of street resurfacing, lighting, and sidewalks. CDBG street resurfacing is near complete in the 5th Ward on Warren Street between Burnham Ave. and Wentworth Ave. In 2019, the City received

a \$260,000.00 CDBG grant award and utilized Motor Fuel Tax (MFT) funds to ensure the project's success. Next up, 157th Street, Buffalo Avenue, and Wilson Ave resurfacing are scheduled for spring 2021 - these projects are funded by Rebuild Illinois Funds. Street resurfacing will continue city wide where needed. We appreciate the residents' patience.



## Mayor Honors Best and Brightest in 2020

Mayor Michelle once again highlights the achievements of our local students and teachers with the “2020 Mayor’s Student Awards/Teacher of the Year Awards”. These honors are geared toward high school seniors and 8th grade students, and are given out City Council Meetings pre-covid. The Mayor has built this program to recognize students and teachers each year for their academic accomplishments. Students are given positive and encouraging feedback to help build confidence and success. Local students are rewarded for a job well done! Recognition does wonders for our children’s morale and their enthusiasm about school work and future outlook about education.



## Calumet City Secures \$13 Million in Grants to Revitalize Neighborhoods

There is no community in the entire state of Illinois that secures more grant money than Calumet City. The underlying goal of this effort is to find funding that would enhance the quality of life for our residents and business owners. The grants we seek encompass our public infrastructure including improvements to streets, lighting, curbs, gutters, sidewalks, sewer, drainage, water, and much more! Over the past 18 months, the City has written and submitted more than 30 grant applications requesting about \$30 million in grant program dollars.

To date, the City has been awarded nearly half of its requests. The City has received about \$13 million and has applications of about \$17 million pending award decisions.

College interns from Purdue University Northwest and the University of Illinois at Chicago have

demonstrated tremendous abilities to help secure this funding. Their research and writing abilities ensured the City’s capacity to compete for funding in the most proficient and professional manner possible. The City is proud of these students and we are proud of our College Internship Program.



## Calumet City Helps the Environment

The Calumet City administration is in tune to the needs of our nation’s environmental concerns. The City hosted electronic recycling events on: October 24th at City Hall; November 14th at Sandridge Fitness Center; and November 21st at Our Lady of Knock. Republic services, the City’s garbage hauler, and Public Works CANNOT pick up electronics, as they are banned from disposing at landfills. The City estimates nearly 14 truck loads of televisions and electronics were recycled!

Thank you to all who came out and volunteered to help save the environment.



## Calumet City - Love This Place

On a beautiful day in November, three of Calumet City’s retired employees set up “coffee in the park” (with social distancing) in front of City Hall at Pulaski Park. They brought coffee and donuts to existing employees to show love for their Calumet City work family.



Marcia Kolczynski (left), Purchasing Department; Jayne Kielbania (center), Purchasing Department/Public Works; and Debi Costello (right), Finance Department (masks removed for pictures).



## “Fun Run,” Scary Good Fun

Mayor Michelle, Clerk Nyota Figs, Second Ward Alderman Mary Beth Swibes, Third Ward Alderman DeAndre Tillman, and Seventh Ward Alderman Anthony Smith participate in Calumet Memorial Park District’s Halloween 5K Fun Run/Walk on October 31st. This annual event brings community pride, satisfaction derived from individual achievements, and camaraderie within the neighborhoods.

# 2020 HOLIDAY HOUSE DECORATING CONTEST

Sign up **FREE** and win one of three Citywide overall prizes

★1st Place Best Citywide \$300

★2nd Place Best Citywide \$200

★3rd Place Best Citywide \$150

**Best in each Ward will have 3 top prizes too!**

★ 1st in Ward: \$100 for Don Pedros Restaurant

★ 2nd in Ward: \$75 for Athena's Pancake House

★ 3rd in Ward: \$50 for Panos Big Boy

**Sign up today and let Calumet City shine!**

- ONLY residents of single-family homes within Calumet City may enter the contest.
- **MANDATORY**– an entry form must be submitted to participate
- All entry forms must be *received by noon*– December 11th. Entries received after this date will NOT be accepted or eligible for the contest.
- All entry forms may be submitted by US mail *or* via email [EconomicDevelopmentDepartment@CalumetCity.org](mailto:EconomicDevelopmentDepartment@CalumetCity.org).
- ONLY outdoor decorations will be judged. All judging will be based on creativity, curb appeal, theme, uniformity, neatness & organization
- **Judging will begin the week of December 16th. Decorations should be ready for viewing at 6pm**
- Winners will be contacted and announced by the City on social media and the City's website (www.CalumetCity.org)



**2020 Holiday Decoration Official Entry**

YES, Please include me in this year's  
Holiday Decoration Contest.

**PLEASE PRINT**

**Deadline to enter: Noon, December 11th**

You can mail or e-mail this form to:

**City Hall– Holiday House Decoration Contest**

**204 Pulaski Rd**

**Calumet City, IL 60409**

Or

Email: [EconomicDevelopmentDepartment@CalumetCity.org](mailto:EconomicDevelopmentDepartment@CalumetCity.org)

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_ Daytime Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

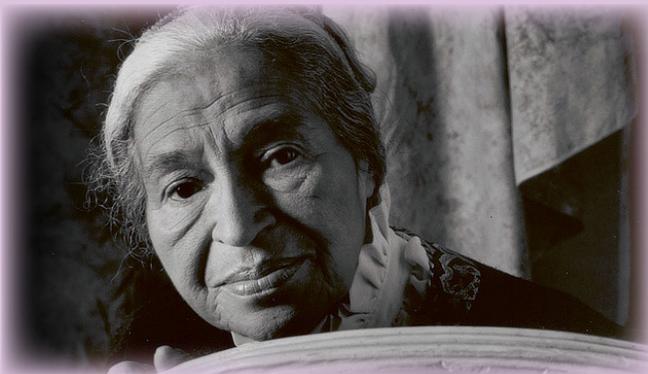
## February is Black History Month

*2021 Theme: The Black Family: Representation, Identity, and Diversity*

Scholars have determined that there are 28 exciting ways Black History Month can be celebrated - and there are other significant and personal ways to celebrate as well.

1. Support a Black business
2. Visit a Black History or Civil Rights Museum in your local area
3. Donate to a Black organization
4. Host a Black film marathon
5. Wear your hair out in its natural form to school, work or a social event
6. Become a member of a Black organization
7. Trace your family history
8. Spend time with a Black elder in your community
9. Read a book by a Black author
10. Cook a soul food meal
11. Sign up to mentor a Black child in your community
12. Donate to an HBCU
13. Attend or host a Black culture event in your community
14. Learn about an unsung hero of Black history
15. Support a Black creative (artist, poet, local musician, etc.)
16. Study the African Diaspora
17. Explore Black Music
18. Call out racism and prejudice in your community
19. Sign up to receive news from a Black organization
20. Contribute an essay or blog to a Black media outlet
21. Support the black media, black press and the NNPA
22. Engage in healthy conversations about Black history on social media
23. Learn the lyrics to Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing
24. Read Dr. King's I Have a Dream Speech
25. Decorate your home with Black Art
26. Read a biography of an influential Black figure
27. Write a Black children's Book
28. Register to vote!

**African American History Calendars will be available in January.**



# ASALH

ASSOCIATION *for the Study of*  
AFRICAN AMERICAN LIFE *and* HISTORY® | EST. 1915



## March is Women's History Month

The theme for 2021 National Women's History Month captures the spirit of these challenging times. Since most 2020 women's suffrage centennial celebrations were curtailed, the National Women's History Alliance is extending the annual theme for 2021 to "Valiant Women of the Vote: Refusing to Be Silenced."

Women's History Month is a celebration of women's contributions to history, culture and society and has been observed annually in the month of March in the United States since 1987. What is the color for Women's History Month?

Colors of the Day: Internationally, purple is a color for symbolizing women.

International Women's Day is celebrated in many countries around the world. It is a day when women are recognized for their achievements without regard to divisions, whether national, ethnic, linguistic, cultural, economic, or political.

The earliest Women's Day observance, called "National Woman's Day," was held on February 28, 1909, in New York City, organized by the Socialist Party of America at the suggestion of activist Theresa Malkiel.

Within the month of March, Calumet City will be honoring women who have helped to make our City great!



*Michelle Markiewicz Qualkinbush,  
First Woman Mayor,  
City of Calumet City*



*Robin Kelly,  
First Woman US Representative for the  
Illinois 2nd Congressional District*



*Kamala Harris,  
First Woman Vice President,  
United States of America*

## Women's History Month



# Southland Live Casino Hosts Drive-Through Turkey Giveaway



Mayor Michelle joined by City officials, firefighters, and staff at the future site of the proposed Southland Live Casino and Delaware North at the River Oaks Center Mall to give away 650 turkeys valued at \$10,000. Our 37,000 residents are so excited about the job opportunities, the educational partnership with South Suburban College, childcare for team members, and the revitalization of River Oaks Center Mall into an entertainment destination. “The time is now for Calumet City,” Mayor Michelle said.

Osi Imomoh, Regional General Manager for Delaware North’s Gaming Division, helped to distribute the turkeys and said “Southland Live Casino is projected to generate \$45-\$50 million in annual state and local taxes and between \$6 to \$8 million to Calumet City alone”.

## REVIEW Winter 2020/2021



City of Calumet City  
204 Pulaski Road  
Calumet City, Illinois 60409



*Be Safe! Be Well!*  
*Home for the Holidays*



“LOVE THIS PLACE”



Christmas 2019.