

WINTER 2026 EDITION

A Message from Mayor Witko



As we reflect on 2025, I am incredibly proud of all that we accomplished together and energized by the momentum carrying us forward. This year marked an important chapter for Morton Grove defined by progress and a shared commitment to our community's future.

One of the most exciting milestones was the opening of our new Morton Grove Metra station, a long-anticipated project that enhances accessibility and connectivity for residents, commuters, and visitors. We also took meaningful steps to shape the future of our community through the Dempster Street Corridor Plan, developing a cohesive vision for redevelopment that supports walkability, economic vitality, and a vibrant sense of place. Stay tuned for the next community workshop to review the draft planning concepts.

2025 also brought continued economic development success, with new businesses opening their doors, reinvestment in key properties, and ongoing development that strengthens our

tax base while preserving the character of our Village. These efforts, paired with cherished community events like Morton Grove Days and ongoing support for our seniors and residents, continue to reinforce the connections that make Morton Grove such a special place to call home.

A successful Village requires a strong team, and I am deeply grateful for the collaborative work of the Village Board, our dedicated staff, and our engaged residents, community leaders, and businesses. Together, your ideas, feedback, and partnership help guide our decisions and ensure Morton Grove continues to thrive. Thank you for being an essential part of Morton Grove's success.

As we look ahead, there is much to be excited about, from continued investment in our business districts and infrastructure to new opportunities that will enhance quality of life for all who live and work here. As we welcome 2026, I wish you and your loved ones a year of health, happiness, and fulfillment, and look forward to celebrating the pride, connection, and shared spirit that make Morton Grove such a special community.

Your Mayor,

2025 IN REVIEW

2025 IN REVIEW

As we welcome 2026, we're also looking back on the Village's many remarkable achievements of 2025. See the 2025 IN REVIEW highlights throughout this newsletter and what we accomplished.

Neighborhood Outreach Meeting

Thursday, February 19
6:00 p.m.

Emma Melzer School
9400 Oriole Avenue

Mayor Witko, the Village Board, and staff invite you to learn about what's happening in your Village!

2026 Resident Handbook

Be sure to explore the 2026 Morton Grove Resident Handbook, a comprehensive, user-friendly guide to Village operations, services, regulations, and resources. Designed for both newcomers and long-time residents, the Handbook provides essential information about living in Morton Grove. Hard copies are available at Village Hall, and a digital version can be accessed anytime at mortongroveil.org.



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Economic Development Updates

Investing in Morton Grove

A Year of Projects



Metro on Main Townhomes

8350 Lehigh Avenue

Construction is nearly complete for an 89-unit townhome development by Lexington Homes. All units are under contract, and nearly 70 units were sold by the end of 2025. The project will be complete in 2026.



Dunkin'

5843 Dempster Street

The former Dunkin' and Subway on this site have been demolished and a new Dunkin' featuring a drive-through is now under construction. The project will be complete in 2026.

Napleton Honda

6900 Dempster Street

Napleton Honda completed construction of a new 40,000-square-foot dealership in December 2025.



Fifth Third Bank

6210 Dempster Street

Fifth Third Bank has begun construction of a new bank branch at 6210 Dempster. The development is part of a multi-property deal that included the Village's purchase of Fifth Third's current site (6201 Dempster) for a new Village Hall and Police Station. The design for the new municipal center is underway and approval of the project will be sought in 2026.



Dempster Corridor Planning Underway

Made possible through a \$160,000 grant from the Regional Transportation Authority, the Dempster Corridor Plan will establish a vision for Morton Grove's primary commercial corridor, provide recommendations to improve access to transit and destinations, attract redevelopment, and enhance safety and connectivity for corridor users, especially transit riders, pedestrians, and bicyclists.

Launched in June 2025 with a community workshop, the planning process has already engaged hundreds of community members, with a draft plan to be shared at a community workshop in Spring 2026. Learn about the project and opportunities to share your input at plandempster.org.

Mixed-Use Development Approved at 8500-50 Lehigh

In 2025, 8500 MG LLC began the approval process for a 60-unit mixed-use project with 3,000 square feet of ground-floor retail space on Village-owned property at Chestnut and Lehigh. The Village Board approved the project in January 2026, with construction planned this year pending a redevelopment agreement.



2025 IN REVIEW

20 businesses

located, relocated, expanded, or changed ownership in 2025



1,600

building permits issued

\$35 million

total value of 2025 permitted construction



\$607,824,138

in retail sales in 2025



173,642 sq. ft.

new or remodeled commercial & industrial space entitled in 2025



10,175 workers

employed in Morton Grove in 2025





New Metra Station Opens in December 2025

The Village of Morton Grove proudly announced the opening of the new Morton Grove Metra Station at 8501 Lehigh Avenue on December 15, 2025, welcoming commuters in time for the first scheduled train. The previous station, originally constructed in 1976, was demolished later in the week.

The new Craftsman-style Metra station is a modern, accessible facility designed to meet today's commuter needs. Features include enhanced Metra communications, an after-hours heated waiting area, and improved accessibility in a timeless building. Final site improvements will be completed in Spring 2026, and the Village is in the process of seeking a tenant to lease the station's retail space.

The project was made possible through grant assistance provided by the State of Illinois and the support of State Representative Mike Kelly, financial and technical assistance provided by Metra, and the Village's responsible use of tax increment financing (TIF).

The new station reflects continued investment in accessible, reliable, and efficient transit. Serving as a focal point for the Village's transit-oriented district, the station will promote ridership and present a more welcoming face for Morton Grove. The project complements Lexington's nearby townhome development and the planned mixed-use project at Chestnut and Lehigh, and will support continued development and investment in the area.



Village Hosts Fifth Sustainability Expo

On September 13, the Environment and Natural Resources Commission hosted the fifth annual Sustainability Expo. The event featured 35 exhibitors, live music, a jump house, and educational materials and giveaways. Visitors dropped off recyclable items, discovered energy-saving products, and learned practical ways to live more sustainably.

\$25,000 Grant Funds Tree Plantings in 2025 & 2026

The Village was awarded a \$25,000 matching grant by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and USDA Forest Service, administered by the Morton Arboretum's Chicago Region Trees Initiative (CRTI), to plant 450 trees on public property through 2025 and 2026. In 2025, the Village planted the initial 225 trees in addition to its annual planting schedule of 160 trees, for a total of 385 trees planted in the last year. The remaining 225 trees will be planted in 2026. The Village was able to plant more trees with the grant funds by using Public Works staff rather than contractors.

GREEN IN 2025

385 trees 
planted in the parkway in 2025

 **24th year**
of Tree City USA designation

 **252,067 lbs.**
collected for compost by WasteNot in 2025,
equivalent to **11,296 miles**
not driven based on carbon equivalency

128 households 
participated in WasteNot's food
scrap collection program in 2025

4.6 
tons of pumpkins
composted in the 2025 Pumpkin Smash

 **2,355 tons**
waste collected & recycled in 2025

30 
minutes
to O'Hare using the Dempster Pulse line

 **12,480 lbs.**
 of paper & 17,220 lbs. of electronics
recycled at the 2025 electronics
recycling & document destruction event

Winter 2026 Updates

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

2026 Village Hall Closures

May not reflect actual holiday dates

- Memorial Day Monday, May 25
- Independence Day Friday, July 3
- Labor Day Monday, September 7
- Veterans Day Wednesday, November 11
- Thanksgiving Thursday, November 26 -
Friday, November 27
- Christmas Friday, December 25

Public Meetings

Visit www.mortongroveil.org/events for updates. All meetings held at Village Hall at 6101 Capulina Avenue unless otherwise noted.

Advisory Commission on Aging

2nd Tuesday of the following months at 1:00 p.m.
February, April, June, August, October, December
Morton Grove Civic Center, 6140 Dempster Street

Appearance Review Commission

1st Tuesday of month at 7:00 p.m.

Board of Trustees

2nd & 4th Tuesdays of month at 7:00 p.m.

Community Relations Commission

Jan. 12th & 3rd Monday of the following at 6:30 p.m.
March, May, July, September, November

Economic Development Commission

2nd Monday of the following months at 7:00 p.m.
February, April, June, August, October, December

Environment & Natural Resources Commission

1st Monday of the following months at 6:00 p.m.
February, April, June, August, October, December

Fire & Police Commission

4th Tuesday of month at 1:00 p.m.
Fire Station #4, 6250 Lincoln Avenue

Plan Commission & Zoning Board of Appeals

3rd Tuesday of month at 7:00 p.m.

Special Events Commission

3rd Monday of the following months at 6:00 p.m.
February, April, June, August, October, December
Public Works, 7840 Nagle Avenue

Traffic Safety Commission

1st Thursday of month at 7:00 p.m.

Interested in serving on a board or commission? Visit www.mortongroveil.org. For more information, call 847-470-5220.



Village To Launch New Website in 2026

The Village is diligently working toward completion of a new website, planned for launch in early 2026. The redesigned site will improve accessibility and comply with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements, enhance document access and searchability, and provide a more user-friendly experience with clearer navigation and improved functionality for residents, businesses, and visitors.



Design & Engineering for Future Village Hall & Police Station Underway

Design and engineering are underway by FGM Architects for the Village's future municipal center at 6201 Dempster Street, the current site of Fifth Third Bank. The project will expand the facility and bring it into compliance with current accessibility requirements, life-safety codes, and modern policing standards, including secure operations, evidence handling, and public-facing services. The design will incorporate sustainable building features and comply with current energy efficiency codes to reduce long-term operational costs and environmental impacts. The project will undergo entitlement and

Village Seeks Metra Station Retail Tenant

In January 2026, the Village issued a request for qualifications (RFQ) seeking a qualified business owner or operator to lease the retail space at the new Morton Grove Metra commuter rail station (8501 Lehigh Avenue). The 160-square-foot space occupies the north end of the new station and includes a walk-up service window that provides access to customers on the building's exterior. The space is well-positioned for active retail uses, including coffee shops and grab-and-go food service. Statements of qualifications are due by 3:00 p.m. on February 27, 2026. To request a copy of the RFQ, visit mortongroveil.org. Call 847-663-3063 with any questions.

review by the Plan Commission, Traffic Safety Commission, and Appearance Commission in spring 2026, with construction planned to begin in 2027.

In December 2024, the Village closed on the purchase of the 1.67-acre property for future use as a combined village hall and police station. At the same time, Fifth Third Bank purchased the property at 6210 Dempster Street, where construction of its new 2,800-square-foot bank building is underway. Fifth Third will continue operating at 6201 Dempster Street under a Village lease until construction is complete.

Future use of the current Flickinger Municipal Center at 6101 Capulina Avenue has not been determined. Any redevelopment of the site will be subject to a public process that will likely involve a request for proposals (RFP), a public document and process that allows the community to see how the property is being marketed. As part of the process, the Village Board would consider any final proposal at a public meeting.



2025 Arterial Street Improvement Program

In 2025, the Public Works Department used federal funding to lead four major roadway resurfacing and improvement projects in Morton Grove, representing a significant level of new investment in local roadway infrastructure:

- **Gross Point Road from Oakton Street to Main Street**
- **Beckwith Road from Shermer Road to Austin Avenue**
- **Shermer Road from Harlem Avenue to Golf Road**
- **Central Avenue from Dempster Street to Golf Road**

The Department launched project websites to provide public information and allow community members to actively track the project progress at: mortongrovesip.com and mg-grosspointdresurfacing.com. These improvements enhance traffic flow, safety, and overall driving conditions for residents and visitors.

50/50 Tree Planting Program Open for 2026

The Village's 50/50 Tree Planting Program is accepting applications for 2026. The program allows participants to choose a specific type of tree to be planted in the public parkway by paying 50% of the cost. The Village will pay the other 50%. This year's cost for the resident is \$60 per tree. The deadline to submit a request to participate is April 1, 2026. To learn more and apply, visit mortongroveil.org/50-50-tree-planting-program-for-2026.

Major Infrastructure Project Updates

In 2025, the Public Works Department worked with partners on a variety of projects to improve the reliability and quality of critical public infrastructure.

Roadway Improvements

In partnership with Skokie and the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), the Village completed construction of roadway, signal, and underground infrastructure improvements to Austin Avenue and Oakton Street.

The Village completed resurfacing of large segments of Beckwith Road, Central Avenue, Shermer Road, and Gross Point Road. Pavement markings will be completed in 2026.

The Village replaced 600 feet of watermain along Cameron Avenue.

The Village supported IDOT in its replacement of the Oakton Street bridge.

The Village conducted traffic studies at the intersections of Menard Avenue and Church, Lincoln Avenue and Concord Drive, and Lincoln Avenue and Menard Avenue.

Bike, Ped & Transit Improvements

The Village worked with IDOT, Metra, and the Villages of Skokie and Niles to continue efforts to expand the Oakton Street multi-use path.

The Village began engineering for lighting and pedestrian improvements on Lehigh Avenue south of Lincoln Avenue.

The Village oversaw construction of the new Metra station. Site work will be completed in 2026 as weather permits.

The Village supported Pace in its completion of the five Pulse Dempster Street bus rapid transit stations.

Facility Improvements

The Village undertook an Arc Flash Study at Public Works facilities, replaced the roof at Fire Station 5 and the HVAC systems at both Fire Stations 4 and 5.

2025 IN REVIEW



1,345 trees trimmed in the public parkway

100+ water main breaks repaired by the Public Works Water Division

83 miles of roadways maintained in 2025

24,200 square feet of public sidewalk repaired in 2025

110 tons of asphalt patched to restore alley pavement

1,035 linear feet of concrete curbing replaced in 2025

152 fleet vehicles serviced and maintained

Report Power Outages

In the event of a power outage in your area, please report the outage to www.comed.com/outages/experiencing-an-outage/report-an-outage, by calling 1-800-Edison-1 (1-800-334-7661), or through ComEd's mobile app. Through ComEd's website, you can check the status of an outage and view an outage map. Remember, never touch and stay away from downed power lines. To request Police response, call 9-1-1.

Public Safety Updates

2025 IN REVIEW

National Winner



Destination Zero National Award Winner - General Safety presented by the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund



1st Place in class

for the 2024-25 Traffic Safety Challenge (Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police)



1,600+ attendees at the 2025 National Night Out



26,033 hours of Fire Department training for firefighters

4 minutes, 42 seconds

average Fire Department response time in 2025



4,375 calls for service

to the Fire Department January - December 2025



500+ attendees at the 2025 Fire Department Open House

MGFD: Ready for Anything

Did you know that the Fire Department does more than fight fires? Squad 4 is equipped for hazmat response and technical rescues, including trench and high-angle rope rescues, building collapses, and vehicle and machinery incidents. The squad can refill Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) bottles, supporting extended operations, and several Department members are trained to the highest level of technical rescue, ensuring expert response during incidents.



Fire Department Staff Member Receives 45-Year Service Award

In 2025, Mary Jo LeBeau, Administrative Assistant at the Fire Department and 52-year Village employee, was presented with a 45-year service award from the Illinois Fire Service Administrative Professionals Association (IFSAP). LeBeau was an original IFSAP member and was instrumental in providing the framework for what the Association is today. She has held several positions, including executive director and vice-president. IFSAP was founded 45 years ago and has benefited from LeBeau's guidance and commitment since its beginning.

SIGN UP FOR COMMUNITY ALERTS



SMART911.COM

The Village encourages all residents to sign up for Community Alerts. This system is used by the Police, Fire, and Public Works Departments to quickly share important information about activities and incidents in your neighborhood. Whether it's fire hydrant flushing, road closures, or active police incidents, Community Alerts keep you informed with accurate updates delivered before they reach social media or other news sources. Scan the QR code or visit www.smart911.com/smart911/ref/reg.action?pa=mortongroveil to sign up.

MORTON GROVE

CITIZENS POLICE & FIRE ACADEMY

The Police and Fire Departments are seeking participants for the 2026 Citizens Police and Fire Academy. The Academy is a ten-week program with one block of instruction per week and is designed to give community members an understanding of Police and Fire Department operations and a working knowledge of law enforcement and firefighting.

The 2026 Academy will run from March 18 to May 20, 2026. Classes are held every Wednesday from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

at Village Hall (6101 Capulina Avenue). Class size is limited, so register early. There is no cost to participate. The Academy will conclude with a graduation ceremony and each participant will receive a certificate of completion. For more info, contact the Police Department Community Liaison Officers, Ofc. Jurasz (jjurasz@mortongroveil.org) or Ofc. Lang (slang@mortongroveil.org) at 847-663-3804. Visit mortongroveil.org to learn more and to sign up.



Mayor Witko: First Year in Office

Village Trustee Janine Witko was sworn in as Mayor and Village President on May 27, 2025, beginning her four-year term. She is the first woman to serve as Mayor of Morton Grove. With more than a decade of experience as a Village Trustee and a strong background in economic development and planning, Mayor Witko brings a results-driven approach to municipal leadership.

Since taking office, Mayor Witko and the Village Board, including new Trustee Keith White, have made significant progress. Early actions include updating the Village Code to address e-bike safety, revising tobacco regulations to limit future expansion, advancing capital improvement projects, undertaking a Village website update, improving communications, and securing grant funding to support Village priorities.

Former Mayor Daniel P. DiMaria Retires

At its May 13, 2025, Village Board meeting, Trustees, staff, and community members honored retiring Mayor Daniel P. DiMaria for twelve years as Mayor and more than twenty years of service to the Village of Morton Grove. First elected in 2001, Mayor DiMaria served as Village Clerk, Trustee, and Mayor, leading major economic development initiatives, infrastructure investments, and public projects, including Sawmill Station, the Morton Grove Metra Station, and the Morton Grove–Niles Water Commission.

To recognize his contributions, the Village Board approved honorary "Dan DiMaria Drive" street signs along School Street at Crain and Dempster Streets, and permanently named the Morton Grove Days main stage in his honor. The Village of Morton Grove thanks Mayor DiMaria for his dedicated service and leadership and wishes him the very best in his future endeavors.



Village Passes E-Bike & Scooter Ordinance

In August 2025, the Village Board amended the Village Code to better regulate electric bikes (e-bikes), scooters, and similar devices, enhancing safety in the Village. New definitions and restrictions include:

Class 1 E-Bike: Provides motor assistance via pedaling, motor assistance stops at 20 m.p.h., allowed on sidewalks and streets

Class 2 E-Bike: Provides motor assistance without pedaling, motor assistance stops at 20 m.p.h., allowed on streets only

Class 3 E-Bike: Motor provides assistance via pedaling, motor assistance stops at 28 m.p.h., allowed on streets only

Low-Speed Electric Scooter: Motorized scooter weighing less than 100 lbs, max. speed of 10 m.p.h, allowed on sidewalks only

Electric Scooter: Motorized scooter with max. speed greater than 10 m.p.h., allowed on streets only

All other e-bikes and many other motorized devices are prohibited. Riders of all devices must be at least 16 years old and have a driver's license or be under direct guardian supervision (except for low-speed electric scooters, riders must be 18 years or older). Parents are liable for their minors' violations and all riders must wear a helmet. For more information, visit mortongroveil.org/e-bikes.

Where do your tax dollars go?



- 36.0% Elementary School District
- 32.3% High School District
- 11.6% Village of Morton Grove
- 5.5% Morton Grove Park District
- 4.6% Cook County
- 3.6% Morton Grove Public Library
- 3.4% Metropolitan Water Reclamation
- 3.0% Other

Based on sample 2024 Morton Grove tax bill for residential property at Capulina & School

The Exchange

www.mortongroveil.org

Village Hall Hours: Monday - Friday
8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Village Phone Numbers

Police, Fire or Medical Emergency
9-1-1

Fire Administration
847-470-5226

Police Administration
847-470-5200

Public Works
847-470-5235

Senior Services
847-663-3070

Civic Center Rentals
847-663-3071

Village Facilities

Village Hall (Switchboard)
847-965-4100

Village Administration
847-470-5220

Building & Inspectional Services
847-663-3040

Community & Economic Development
847-663-3063

Village Officials

President Janine Witko

Village Clerk Eileen Scanlon Harford

Trustees

Saba Khan | Rita Minx | Ashur Shiba

John Thill | Connie Travis | Keith White

Village Administrator

Charles L. Meyer

Village Attorney

Teresa Hoffman Liston



The Village of Morton Grove
6101 Capulina Avenue
Morton Grove, IL 60053-2985

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2025 Winter Adopt-A-Planter Program

Thanks to all the residents, businesses, and organizations that participated in the 2025 Winter Adopt-A-Planter Program. You helped keep Morton Grove beautiful and festive this season.



2026

MORTON GROVE
SENIOR EXPO



FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2026

9:00 AM TO 12:00 PM

MORTON GROVE CIVIC CENTER | 6140 DEMPSTER

FREE ADMISSION | QUESTIONS? 847-663-3070