



**Greenest  
Region  
Compact**

**COLLABORATING FOR SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES**

## **GRC UPDATE**

### **October 6, 2022**



**Kevin Timony – Village Manager**

**Jon Petrillo – Assistant Village Manager**

**David Brown – Director of Public Works**

**Andrew Jennings – Director of Community Development**

**Jennifer Heavrin – Community Development**



## JANUARY

- Vernon Hills Join the Greenest Region Compact, Village Board passes Ordinance 9-12 (Climate – Commit to the Compact of Mayors).
- Educational component for Village staff on the topic of sustainability (Municipal Operations – Training)
- Familiarization for staff on purchasing and giving consideration to sustainability (Municipal Operations – Training)
  - Daily use items like plastics should be avoided, and instead purchase items that are biodegradable, recyclable, and/or compostable.
- Village of Vernon Hills signed a witness slip and supported SWALCO's initiative to pass the Carpet Stewardship Bill. (Leadership – Advocate for policies that contribute to sustainability).
- Installation of filtered water stations to reduce need for purchase of (plastic) bottled water. (Waste and Recycling – Discourage use of products resulting in unmanageable waste).

## FEBRUARY

- Village staff participated in the Community Solar Webinar presentation on opportunities for renewable energy. (Energy - Collaboration, support, education on clean energy options for the community).
  - One challenge with this specific program was a requirement for a 10 acre parcel to be used as a municipal solar field.
- Assistant Village Manager's position assigned to join the GRC Environmental Committee – (Municipal Operations – dedication of staff to sustainability initiatives).
- Village presented information on existing infrastructure and energy use for the Vernon Township Energy Resilience Commission feasibility study. (Municipal Operations – Leverage Grants Opportunities).
- Promotion of 211 on Village Communications platforms. (Sustainable Communities – Ensure essential human service programs are available).

## MARCH

- Tree City status awarded to the Village of Vernon Hills by the Arbor Day Foundation (March 4, 2022)
- Development of Village EOP – new Illinois guidelines. (Sustainable Communities – Create a community that is well prepared for disaster).
- Creation of Butterfield Road bike and pedestrian path connecting Gregg's Landing to NCT (Mobility – Coordinate with regional transportation agencies to maximize bicycle and pedestrian connectivity and mobility).

## APRIL

- Village staff gave a presentation to the Rotary Club on the benefits of supporting green initiatives, the Greenest Region Compact, and the Village's commitment to sustainability. (Municipal Operations - Educate community partners).
- Passing of Ordinance 2022-29, authorizing a contract (not to exceed \$120,000) for ecological services to perform native stewardship in the Village's open spaces (Land – Long term management).
- Passing of Ordinance 2022-038, authorizing a contract with Clark Aquatic (not to exceed \$33,000) for weed and algae control in Village ponds (Water – Enhance natural features of storm water detention and retention systems).
- Passing of Ordinance 2021-108, authorizing a contract with Burke Engineering for design services to plan the installation of a boardwalk along Lake Harvey (Water – allowing public access and encouraging stewardship of waterways).
- Village of VH & Waste Management sponsored an Earth Day event for Village Seniors and provided native plants that are beneficial to good a health and the environment (4/22/22). (Municipal Operations – Special Event Management)
- Filipino Cultural Awareness Day – Vernon Hills Seniors Organization participated in this event at the Village Hall on 4/19/22, (Sustainable Communities – Foster an understanding of diverse cultures and traditions).
- Police Department and Village Board members participated in Darshana: A Glimpse into Hindu Civilization) at the Sullivan Center on 4/23/22. (Sustainable Communities – Foster an understanding of diverse cultures and traditions).

- Village staff participated in the Metropolitan Mayor’s Caucus webinar on Community Bike and Pedestrian Plans, 4/28/22. (Mobility – Collaborate to develop transportation infrastructure with context sensitivity).
- Trustee Takaoka and Village staff met with officials from Greystar (Everleigh) on 4/28 and received an update on the proposed creation of a “rain garden,” to be adjacent to the water feature leading into the residential development, (Sustainable Communities – Support Community Gardens).
- Spring maintenance and plantings at public spaces and streetscapes, (Land – Maintain beautiful landscapes and streetscapes to enhance gateways and important public spaces).



## MAY

- Village of Vernon Hills earned Tree City Status - 30 years in a row! (Land – Earn Tree City Status).
  - Components include the requirement to spend at least \$2.08 cents per capita on forestry (the Village spends approximately double this amount), and have a forestry department (Land – Sustain and renew urban forest).
- Arbor Day Event at the Arbortheater - May 14, 2022 (Municipal Operations – Special Event Management).
  - Educational component about the value of the native trees and plant materials
  - Native saplings provided
  - Partnership with Vernon Hills-Lincolnshire Go Green on educational component – Food Waste and Curbside Composting and Protecting Habitat for pollinators).
- Implementation & Promotion of Ride Lake County, (Mobility – Support Regional Transportation Innovation).
- Information provided to all Seniors Organization members and Senior Living Communities. Information also placed on Village Communications platforms.
- Network with SWALCO regarding opportunities to expand recycling programs past pilot program status, (Leadership – Seek Collaboration with the business sector to support municipal sustainability).
- SWALCO Re-Use a Shoe Collection Event at VHPW – 5/5/22, (Municipal Operations – Special Event Management).
- SWALCO Rain Barrel and Compost Bin Event – 5/13/22, (Municipal Operations – Special Event Management).
- Utilize Village communications to create awareness and promotion of the Village’s simplified solar panel permitting process (Economic Development).
- Utilize Village communications to create awareness of the Illinois Choice Program, allowing residents to acquire their energy from green sources, (Economic Development).
- Promotion of SWALCO special materials collection events. This new program starts May 25, and future events will be on the third Wednesday of every month from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. Information shared to be shared on all Village Communications platforms to create awareness of this waste diversion program, (Waste – Provide access to recycling infrastructure and services at public places).
- Village staff met with consultants from Veregy to discuss assessing Village facilities for potential green energy implementations, May 4, 2022; (Energy – Retro-commissioning study for facilities).
- Village Emergency Operations Plan is formally reviewed and approved by Lake County Emergency Management Agency, (Sustainable Communities – Create a community that is well prepared for disaster).



## JUNE

- Village of Vernon Hills adopts SWALCO model policy on Compost Procurement (Waste & Recycling – Support regional efforts for developing food scrap composting services).
- Community Development continues to collaborate with Centennial and Kimley Horn to create and construct ‘vibrant public gathering spaces’ at H20 (Land – ‘Placemaking’).

- Metropolitan Mayor's Caucus Environmental Committee – Energy Subcommittee, June 21, 2022 – Briefing on Utility Energy Company Efficiency Plans and Programs (Energy – Partner with utilities to promote energy efficiency programs to the community).
- SWALCO Rain Barrel and Compost Bin Event – 5/13/22, (Municipal Operations – Special Event Management).
- Renewal of Village Diversity & Inclusion Initiative – Dr. Watkins is conducting follow up meetings with staff, (Sustainable Communities - Support social justice and equity throughout the community).
- Promotion of Park and Forest Preserve Districts, (Land - Collaborate with partners to promote recreational opportunities that are accessible to all).
- Arbortheater Concert Series – June 15 – August 4. Seven free concerts in the park, (Land – Enhance recreational opportunities that are accessible to all residents).
- Meeting with Com-Ed representatives regarding Village energy usage and discussion about sustainable energy, June 15. Darren Boundy advised he can provide content for sharing on Village communications platforms to help raise awareness of “choice” programs that give consumers opportunities to purchase their energy from specific providers, (Energy – Support Procurement of renewable energy through community choice programs).
- Meeting with Go Green Vernon Hills – Lincolnshire, Com-ed, and Village staff, June 23. Discussion about sustainability and efficiency efforts in regard to energy, and the VTERC, (Leadership – Share information about municipal leadership regarding sustainability with the community).



## JULY

- Use of Vernon Hills Athletic Complex for Pipe City Tournament – (Land – Make parks accessible for recreational opportunities).
- Promotion of Park and Forest Preserve Districts – Promotion of Lake County Forest Preserves and programs during Summer, (Land - Collaborate with partners to promote recreational opportunities that are accessible to all).
- Metropolitan Mayor's Caucus Environmental Committee – Leading Healthy Communities, July 19, 2022. - Briefing on the role of leadership in setting the tone for culture and vibrancy of the community, (Sustainable Communities – connecting to services that support health and wellness).
- Preparation and response to pest and disease threats to public health – Village of Vernon Hills and Clarke to provide mosquito monitoring and management with adjoining municipalities to apply appropriate repellents in standing water and air to deter a range of potential health issues, (Health & Safety - Foster a culture of health and safety wellness).
- Collaborate to restore wetland and other important eco-systems – buckthorn and shoreline stabilization of Harvey Lake, (Land – Conserve and restore and enhance natural features and ecosystems).
- Foster healthy community relationships through use of open space / Enhance parks & open space for recreational opportunities accessible to all residents – Partnership between Park District and Village to host Summer Celebration, (Land - Parks and Open Space – Support Networks of accessible, well-used and enjoyable parks).
- Promotion of 211 on Village communications platforms, (Sustainable Communities – Ensure high quality essential human service programs are available).
- Landscaping Plan to improve aesthetics of Townline Commons / RT 60 and Fairway – Board presentation July 19, 2022.
- Installation of bicycle racks at Portillo's – Board Meeting 7/19/22. The petitioner (Portillo's) requested to have additional vehicular lanes added to their drive-thru. A citizen approached the Board and requested consideration be given to have the restaurant bicycle-friendly, with bike parking made available. The

petitioner agreed and advised bike racks would be installed, (Mobility – Support safe and active transportation – Create bicycle and pedestrian connectivity throughout the community).

## AUGUST

- Installation of water station to reduce need for purchase of (plastic) bottled water at the Municipal Golf Course. (Waste and Recycling – Discourage use of products resulting in unmanageable waste).
- Veregy presented options for incorporating renewable energy into Village Capital Improvement Plan, (8/3/22). These options were received from participating in the VTERC, (Energy – Support audits and studies of institutional facilities).
- Promotion of Park and Forest Preserve Districts - Little Bear RibFest. Aquatic Center events, etc; (Land - Collaborate with partners to promote recreational opportunities that are accessible to all).
- Foster healthy community relationships through use of open space / Enhance parks & open space for recreational opportunities accessible to all residents – Partnership between Park District and Village to conduct Ribfest, (Land - Parks and Open Space – Support Networks of accessible, well-used and enjoyable parks).
- Metropolitan Mayor’s Caucus Environmental Committee – Natural Solutions – Green Infrastructure – August 16, 2022. – Presentation on the value of green infrastructure for equitable climate mitigation and adaption. Examples from the Village of Vernon Hills that were shared include the rain garden being implemented at the Everleigh adjacent to the Continental Executive Park retention pond and plan to increase accessibility of Harvey Lake, (Land – Encourage conservation design to protect natural resources).
- SWALCO 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Meeting, August 25. Numerous initiatives discussed to include Extended Producer Responsibility legislation (EPR) for retail packaging which is currently being reviewed downstate. This legislation would push for more responsibility with the management of waste on the producer and less on municipal government, (Leadership – Partner with NGO to advanced sustainability in the community and regionally).
- Village of Vernon Hills and Clarke to perform mosquito management application on 8/31 to reduce potential for community health issues, (Health & Safety - Foster a culture of health and safety wellness).
- Promotion of SWALCO clothing and textile collection points. Information shared to be shared on all Village Communications platforms to create awareness of this waste diversion program, (Waste – Provide access to recycling infrastructure and services at public places).

## SEPTEMBER

- Use of Vernon Hills Athletic Complex for Chicago Cup (Land – Make parks accessible for recreational opportunities for all).
- VH Communications shared content on cable access demonstrating the benefits of organics collection and composting, (Sustainable Communities – Educate the community about sustainability utilizing existing municipal communication outlets).
- VH Communications team members and platforms made accessible to a resident who desired to create content to educate residents on the environmental benefits of electrical blowers versus gas blowers, (Sustainable Communities – Educate the community about sustainability utilizing existing municipal communication outlets).
- Fall maintenance and plantings at public spaces and streetscapes, (Land – Maintain beautiful landscapes and streetscapes to enhance gateways and important public spaces).
- Village staff met with Waste Management officials on September 13, 2022 to discuss operations and efficiencies. WM advised compressed natural gas trucks will be introduced into the fleet starting in 2023 – compressed natural gas vehicles produce 20-30% less emissions, (Economic Development - Recognize and support businesses that practice and promote sustainability).
- Village staff participated in conference hosted by Go Green Illinois to learn about potential legislation to reduce the inflow of single-use plastics and how community groups can support re-use programs, September 13, 2022 (Sustainable Communities – Participate in regional and national sustainability networks).
- Metropolitan Mayor’s Caucus Environmental Committee – Extended Producer Responsibility Legislation – September 20, 2022. Presentation by Walter Willis (SWALCO) and Sydney Harris of the Product Stewardship

Institute on proposed legislation that would make product manufactures responsible for their products at the end of their lifecycle. Legislation has the goal of shifting financial responsibility and management away from the public sector and onto the manufacturer; and incentivizing manufactures to incorporate environmental considerations into the design of packaging, (Waste & Recycling – Ban or discourage the use of products resulting in unmanageable waste (e.g plastics).

- Village received a grant from the DCEO for Storm Water Management Commission objectives to be evaluated by Burke Engineering to improve Lake Charles, (Water – Protect Improve Water Quality – Support Post Development runoff reduction mitigation).

**NOTES-THE FOLLOWING ITEMS ARE LISTED AS GREENEST REGION GOALS & OBJECTIVES FOR ALL COMMUNITIES AND HAVE BEEN ACHIEVED BY THE VILLAGE AND/OR ARE TENDED TO EACH YEAR:**

- Provide curbside recycling, (Waste and Recycling).
- Collaborate to provide recycling services for items not suitable for curbside recycling include Re-Use a Shoe, Holiday Tree Pick up, Household Chemical Waste collection days, (Waste and Recycling).
- Provide Electronic Waste Collection Point, (Waste and Recycling).
- Support proper disposal of medical waste, (Waste and Recycling).
- Support pharmaceutical waste collection, (Waste and Recycling).
- Share the delivery of public services with other local governments. Village achievements include consolidated dispatch, fleet maintenance performed by PW for CFD, and snow plow operations between VHPD and Vernon Township, partnership with the Park District for VHAC and major summer events to include Vernon Hills Days and RibFest, (Municipal Operations – Consolidation).
- Planting of 100 new trees at White Deer Run, (Land – Plant trees to sustain and renew the urban forest).
- Village Mission Statement has added language of “welcoming” and “inclusive” – recommendation from Diversity & Inclusion Initiative; (Sustainable Communities – Cultivate and preserve a welcoming and inclusive community character).
- Vernon Hills Emergency Communications – VHPD / CFPD; (Municipal Operations – Consolidate and/or share the delivery of public services with other local governments).
- Vernon Hills Public Works Fleet Maintenance – support for CFPD; (Municipal Operations – Consolidate and/or share the delivery of public services with other local governments).
- Utilization of Vernon Hills Public Works for fuel by area public sector entities; (Municipal Operations – Consolidate and/or share the delivery of public services with other local governments).
- Energy efficiency measures - e.g. occupancy sensors; (Energy – Implement energy efficiency measures that have a short term payback).
- Regulate burning of landscape waste. Prohibition of open burning via Ordinance 9-12; (Climate – Maintain Clean and healthy air).
- Prioritize the acquisition, dedication and management of lands to create connected greenways – Conversion of Nike site to Vernon Hills Athletic Complex, (Land Conserve, Restore, and enhance natural features).
- Conserve key natural assets – Protection of conservancy areas @ Port Clinton Road and RT 83, (Land – Land Preservation – Conserve, Restore, and enhance natural features).
- Maintain beautiful landscapes and streetscapes to enhance gateways, business districts and important public spaces – Conducted Village-wide, (Land – Landscapes – Sustain beautiful landscapes that provide ecosystem services).
- Create a bicycle and pedestrian plan to improve connectivity in the community and beyond, (Mobility – Support safe and active transportation – see Comprehensive Plan – Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan).
- Provide bicycle parking at municipal facilities such as transit stations, (Mobility - Support safe and active transportation – installation of bicycle rack at Metra).



- Landscaping and tree planting on roadway infrastructure and islands, (Mobility – Incorporate trees and green infrastructure elements into roadway design).
- Silo preservation at Aspen Point, (Sustainable Communities - Preserve and maintain the community's historic assets).
- Cuneo Mansion / Estates Agreement Sustainable Communities - Preserve and maintain the community's historic assets).
- Village Community Development Department, Centennial Real Estate, and planners dedicated to creating a 'walkable-community' in the redevelopment of H20. This includes Phase I (former Sears parcel), and Phase II (former Carson Pirie Scott parcel), (Land – Encourage development of compact and complete residential neighborhoods).