



2022 River Grove

David B. Guerin Mayor
Marjorie A. Manchen Clerk
Lynn Bjorvik Trustee
Michele M. Obaya Trustee
Lora Lantgen Trustee
Katie A. Muellner Trustee
Bob Thomas Trustee
Christopher J. Lilly Trustee

Dear Friendly Neighbors,

I was humbled this past April when your confidence in me was shown once again, and you elected me to be your mayor for another 4 years. Although my time in office has flown by, I am proud of our accomplishments thus far. These include new and updated parks, high profile transit orientated developments (which brings new consumers to our area), ambitious infrastructure projects, and investing in our greatest asset, our staff and public safety teams. This administration's goals have always been to protect and grow the value of your home, keeping our neighborhood safe and providing the best possible service while running lean departments and stretching your tax dollar. We are on this journey together and your input has always been of great importance to myself and the village board.

I am proud of the team I have assembled and realize that as the leader of this community, I am only as successful as the people around me. The village board and I have developed and nurtured relationships with our state, county, and local officials and have been successful in finding grant money, executing inter-governmental agreements beneficial to our village, and coming up with creative solutions to local issues. My department heads and their staff are dedicated to making River Grove an even better place to live. Before you take the time to read the State of the Village (SOV) I want to publicly thank my board, the village officials and every employee here at the village for their hard work and dedication during these most unusual times. Please continue reading to see why River Grove is in such high demand and so desirable to live and work.

Our homes have experienced a significant rise in value of approximately 28% over the past five years. The average median sale price of a single-family home in 2017 was \$221,896 and is now up to \$283,750 in 2021. People in River Grove care about their homes and take pride in making them look nice. In 2021 alone our building department issued 928 building permits.

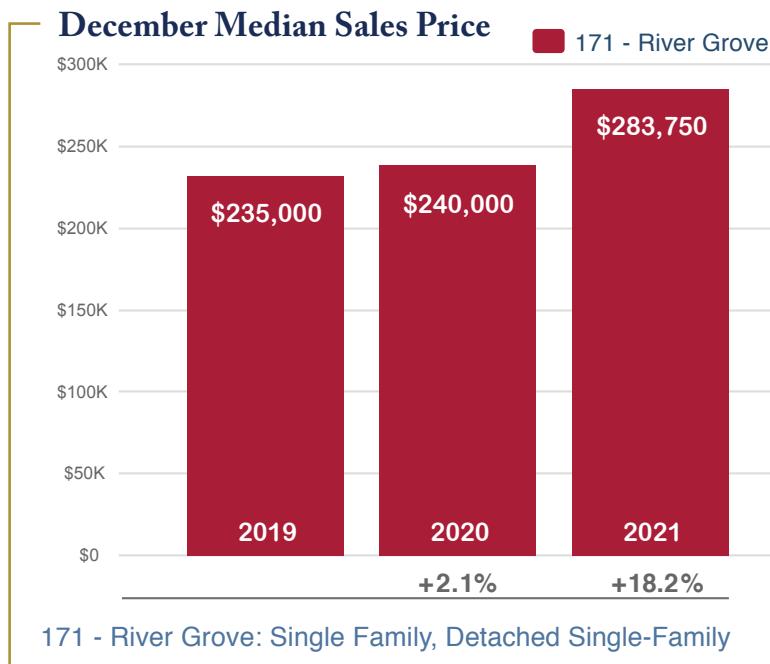
Finance

Discussing 2021 results and 2022 budget priorities cannot begin without first discussing what the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic had been to Village operations and the world economy in general. Since March of 2020, the Village has grappled with many challenges. With that said, the Village weathered the "storm" through 2021 pretty well. Both elected officials and staff rose to the occasion in 2020 with only essential spending allowed for the rest of the 2020 fiscal year.

Going into 2021, the Village passed a balanced budget that provided for increased capital improvements and improvements to the Village's rolling stock.

The combination of expenditure reductions, financial assistance through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and an improvement in the Village's economically sensitive revenues throughout 2021, resulted in the Village's estimated ending general fund balance to increase \$758,000 to \$6.8 million dollars.

Projected 2022 revenues for the Village for all funds are approximately \$5,048,000 greater than budgeted in 2021 with the General Fund projected to receive \$812,000 more than budgeted in 2021. Most of the overall increase is attributable to capital grant dollars from the state to fund capital improvements. The Village has budgeted appropriate matching funds for any of the grants it will be receiving.

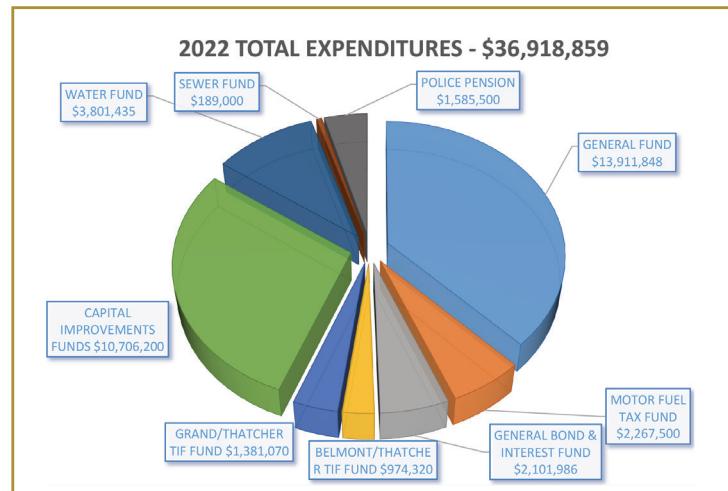


Each data point is 12 months of activity. Data is from January 13, 2022.

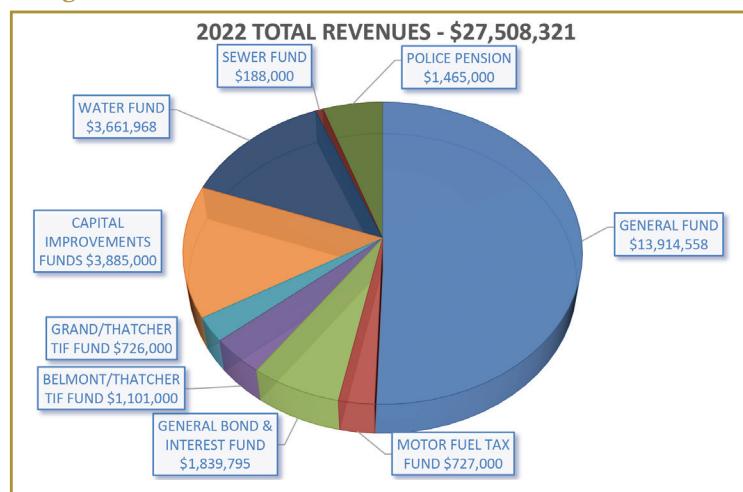
The 2022 expenditure budget for all funds totals \$36,918,859, with the General operating fund totaling \$13,911,848, a modest \$9,888 increase over 2021's budgeted expenditures. The majority of the increase in 2022 spending will be utilizing over \$6 million of the proceeds of a \$10.15 million bond issue that was issued in 2021 to reconstruct new residential and commercial alleys. The remaining alleys will be constructed in the 2023 construction season. After completion of this two-year project, no alley in the Village will be older than 18 years old!

The positive annual trend of the Village in maintaining its percentage of expenditures to the general fund's fund balance has continued. The current projections are that the December 31, 2021 percentage will be 53% and the December 31, 2022 percentage will be 49%. Rating agencies recommend that general purpose governments maintain at least 20% or greater. The Village has minimally maintained that measurement to no less than 39.2% for the past five (5) fiscal years.

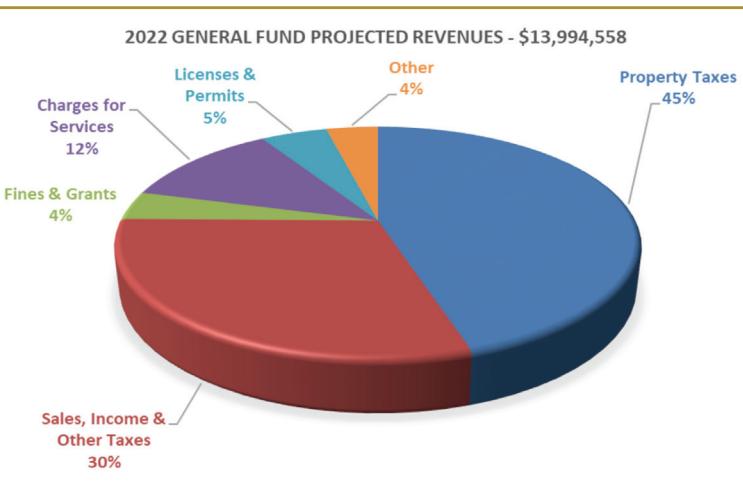
This pie chart presents the Village's estimated expenditures, by fund, in 2022:



This pie chart presents the Village's estimated revenues for each Village fund in 2022:



This pie chart presents the Village's estimated revenues for the Village's general operating fund:



Continuing our trend since 2016, the Village's operating fund balances, that are comprised of its general operating and development funds, have improved. Additionally, while costs have increased due to personnel and material costs, the Village continues to maintain a lower than average tax rate per \$100 of assessed value, thus continuing to maintain a lower property tax burden on residents and businesses compared to our peers.

In 2021 our public works and water departments had a challenging year. In order to help prevent spreading the Coronavirus throughout the crew and ultimately to their families, they had to reconfigure the way they accomplished their day-to-day activities while keeping the team separated. This was done successfully by socially distancing from each other, riding alone in vehicles and implementing safety protocols while still managing to do their jobs well and keep the town clean. The water department detected and repaired multiple water breaks and sewer basin issues this year; new equipment was added to help in these repairs. Due to public works' assistance, repair costs to the Village were kept down.

2020 Tax Rate Comparisons - Neighboring Municipalities			
Municipality	2020 Municipal Tax Rate	Levy Per Capita	
Rosemont	3.012	\$	4,810.29
Hillside	4.583	\$	1,506.72
Maywood	9.740	\$	1,123.49
Franklin Park	1.616	\$	952.82
Bellwood	6.376	\$	922.73
Schiller Park	2.296	\$	782.34
River Grove	3.068	\$	693.66
Melrose Park	2.331	\$	684.35
Elmwood Park	3.192	\$	660.43

Levy per Capita is based a ratio of the amount of the government's extended levy divided by the official population of the municipality. Communities with a higher percentage of industrial properties generally have a lower tax rate due to their higher assessed valuation.

✓ We as a Village completed the following Capital Projects in 2021:

Spruce Street Park - The Village had set aside funds to update the kiddie park at Spruce Street and Wrightwood Avenue. During planning the colors of burgundy, butterscotch and blue were chosen. While most of the equipment has been installed, due to Covid, we are still waiting on park benches, picnic tables and a water fountain.

2021 Finley Street Improvements - The Village completed roadway and water main improvements on Finley Street from Elm Street to Fullerton Avenue. The project replaced 1,400 feet of deteriorated water main and replaced 25 lead pipe services with new copper tubing, as well as grinding and laying new asphalt surface on the roadway, replacing damaged sections of curb and sidewalk, repairing sewers and landscape as needed. This project was funded with Motor Fuel Tax funds the Village receives from the State of Illinois, and Village Water funds.

2021 Roadway Improvements - The Village tackled some of its worst streets as rated on the independent 2020 CMAP Pavement Condition Report. The streets improved were Palmer Street from Leyden Avenue to Fifth Avenue, Trumbull Avenue from Palmer Street to Belden Avenue, Belden Avenue from Trumbull Avenue to Fifth Avenue, Belden Avenue from Finley Street to West Street and Beulah Avenue from Chestnut Street to Franklin Avenue. The work included grinding and laying new asphalt surface on the roadway, replacing damaged sections of curb and sidewalk, repairing sewers and landscape as needed. The project was funded through the Village's Capital Improvement Fund.

2021 Sidewalk Replacement Program - The Village had budgeted additional funds toward the replacement of damaged squares and liable trip spots on our Village sidewalks. This year we focused on entire blocks of sidewalk squares that needed replacement, instead of individual addresses. By doing this we were able to keep costs down and get more sidewalk squares for our buck.

2021 Pavement Patching Program - The Village focused on the pavement condition of Elm Street and Spruce Street; and after receiving favorable bids, was able to stretch the improvements to include the pavements on Kennedy Avenue and Walnut Avenue.

2021 Water meter Upgrade - River Grove has upgraded our Village's water meter reading system. This is a \$1,000,000 project that will update the way the Village reads its water consumption. The Village appreciates the cooperation it received from its residents and business owners to replace over 2,000 water meter reading devices throughout the village system.

The First Avenue Bridge and River Road Improvements - In 2021 the Illinois Department of Transportation had constructed a complete restoration of our First Avenue Bridge; resurfacing and adding a skid-resistant surface.

✓ Looking at Capital Planning for the future of River Grove:

2022 Alley Improvements - The Village will be replacing the first 29 of the 46 original asphalt alleys with the remainder being replaced in 2023. The commercial alleys along Grand Avenue will be constructed of typical concrete pavement due to the truck traffic it receives, the residential alleys will continue to be constructed as "Green Alleys" which are designed to stop the initial runoff of storm events from entering the Village sewer system, thereby helping to reduce local flooding issues during extreme rain events. These improvements will remove the first 2 inches of rainfall from the alleys and garages that currently enter the sewer system.

2022 Trumbull Park Improvements - Veterans Park is investing over \$1,000,000 into upgrading the playground and picnic area at Trumbull Park. This will include new bathrooms, upgrades to the Rockets softball field, a new parking lot, and a splash pad.



2022 Parking Lot Improvements - The Village will be constructing a parking lot on Thatcher Avenue across from the Village Hall on the long vacant "Marmor Auto Repair" property, which will be used by Village staff, police, and fire department personnel. The Village will also be constructing two parking lots, to support business demand, one on Marwood Street just south of the Grand Avenue alley and one behind the Triton Towers Building. These alleys are being contracted with existing funds from the Grand/ Thatcher TIF area.

Belmont and Thatcher Park - The Village has budgeted TIF funds to build an additional new playground. This playground will be located between D'Agostino's and 8383 Belmont on the southeast corner of Belmont and Thatcher. This park will have the newest design in playground equipment as well as a shade area to picnic and a soccer field to run off energy.

2022 Palmer Street & West Street Improvements - The Village received a grant for \$325,000 to improve the 2100 block of West Street from the railroad tracks to Palmer Street and from West Street to Leyden Avenue on Palmer Street. The Village is matching those funds with Rebuild Illinois Funds it received from the State of Illinois to complete the project. The improvement will place a new layer of asphalt on the roadway, repair deteriorated sections of curb, sewer repairs as needed, patching of the existing base, and traffic calming at both West Street and Palmer Street to keep semi-trucks out of the residential areas.

The 2022 Sidewalk Replacement Program - The Village has budgeted additional funds toward the replacement of our Village's liable trip spots around town. Please contact the Public Works Department to add your block to the list. The Village is collaborating with its schools, in order to leverage the benefits of a larger project, to complete work they would like to have done as well.

Sanitary Lift Station No. 1 Replacement - The Village's Sanitary Lift Station No. 1, which was installed in 1965, needs replacement. This project is a critical component in effectively disposing of waste from 2,300 residents, located north of Elmwood Cemetery and the Thatcher Woods Shopping Center, to the sanitary district's sewer main at Belmont and the Des Plaines River.

Grand Avenue and Erie Street Sitting Park and Additional Parking - This project will clean up the southwest corner of Grand Avenue and Erie Street by adding a green space to sit and read a book as well as add six additional parking spaces for our growing businesses. These improvements are being coordinated with the 2022 Commercial Alley Project.

Quite Zone - In October of 2021 the Village of Franklin Park completed the improvements they needed to prepare for establishing a Quiet Zone. The Village of River Grove will bid its Quiet Zone improvements early this spring with the intention of having them completed by the end of April. We will be upgrading the railroad crossing at Thatcher and Arnold Street, Des Plaines River Road and Franklin Avenue, as well as Elm Street and Franklin Avenue, adding deterrents to keep vehicles and pedestrians from going around train crossing signals and gates.

The start of 2021 brought changes and challenges to the police department that were met with patience and professionalism. In 2021, officers of the River Grove Police Department witnessed a 22% increase in calls for service, when compared to 2020.

In late 2020, two senior officers gave their 9 month notices of retirement which were effective in mid and late 2021. In early 2021, two more officers gave their 9 month notices of retirement which were effective in January of 2022. When the retirements were announced, the police administration worked diligently to secure police academy seats throughout 2021. As of today, all four of the retirements have occurred, and four police recruits are finishing up their field training in the police department. This means that staffing levels have been maintained throughout the year.

At the start of the 2021 school year, RGPD divided the schools in River Grove between two school resource officers. This allowed for both K-8 schools, in addition to the high school and the college campus, to have their own dedicated school resource officer throughout the year. School resource officers provide support, training and other resources to school staff and students on an as needed basis.

In an effort to provide residents with efficient police service, Police Chief Mike Konwinski continues to follow through with his initiative of rotating old police vehicles out of the fleet, and replacing them with new vehicles. In 2021, the village board approved the purchase of a new police administration vehicle (replacing a 2005 Ford Crown Victoria), the purchase of a new investigator vehicle (replacing a 2009 Ford Crown Victoria), and the purchase of a new marked police vehicle which will be replacing a 2011 marked police vehicle. The police administration and the village board remain committed to replacing old and worn out vehicles which keep our officers safe while they respond to the needs of our community.

Police staffing levels are being maintained to provide the highest level of police service, while reducing response times for service through the village. Chief Konwinski recognizes that speeding motorist and parking issues occur throughout town. Response initiatives to those issues are ongoing and the chief encourages residents to report issues by calling the PD directly (708-453-2121) or by sending an email to rgpd311@rivergroveil.gov. As previously mentioned, the police department was able to maintain a staffing level of full-time officers that is the highest level in the history of the police department. As your mayor, with the help of the police administration and the elected officials, we will remain committed to increase police staffing in 2022. We will not compromise on the safety of our residents.

The River Grove Fire Department responded to 2187 calls in 2021, of which 837 were fire related and 1341 were EMS related. They also ordered a new ambulance, however due to COVID, its delivery date is now sometime this year. They did, however, put a new Stryker Power Cot into service which will help prevent employee back injuries and allow them to lift patients up to 700 lbs. Additionally, they put a new LIFEPAK 15 Defibrillator into service on our ALS Ambulance and Engine. This cardiac monitoring (including heart rate monitoring and 12-Lead EKG acquisition and interpretation) alerts the users to sudden changes. These latest items allow the RGFD to provide leading-edge patient care. The RGFD was able to train our Police and Public Work personnel in CPR. The hope is to have the rest of our employees trained in 2022.

You have entrusted me and my team to do the very best for River Grove and we don't take that lightly. As we grow, tough and sometimes unpopular decisions have to be made with the greater good of our village in mind. As an elected official I realize that you cannot make everyone happy all of the time, but my promise to you is that this board is here to listen and we value your opinion. Being a public servant has been the greatest honor bestowed upon me, and I thank you for your confidence in me and my team. We have a great community and together we have come a long way, but we all realize there is much more work to do. Thank you for taking the time to read the SOV and please contact me with any of your comments, questions or concerns. I am here to serve you.

Dave Guerin Village President mayor@rivergroveil.gov

