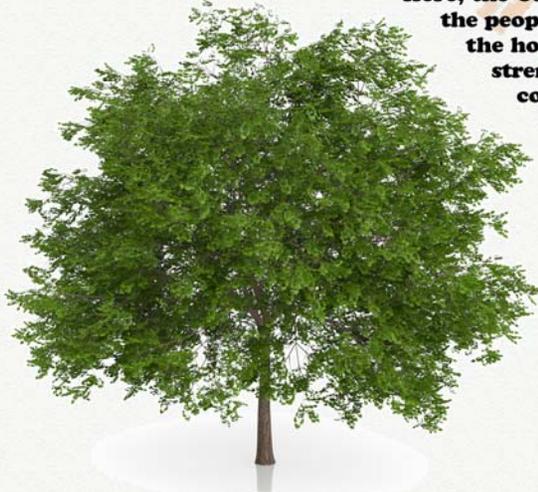


Ginkgo biloba



Considered to be a living fossil, Ginkgo biloba is the oldest living species of tree known to exist in the botanical record, dating back 200 million years. Through the tree's resilience, it has come to symbolize enduring strength, hope, and peace.

Here, the Ginkgo is planted for the people of Park Forest with the hope that peace and strength of community will continue to endure, and that this wonderful tree may symbolize our community as we embrace resilience as Mother Nature intended.



Park Forest
Live Grow Discover



Village of Park Forest
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DOWNTOWN VILLAGE GREEN



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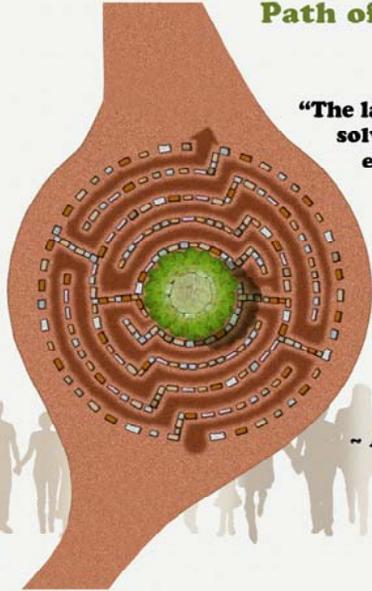
Newly opened in July 2018, the expanded Village Green is a space dedicated to Village residents, a public, open space to engage with one another and promote community. Landscaped entirely with native grasses, forbs and woody plants, the space is also intended to be a showcase of native landscaping and habitat. Landscape features include the Prairie Fire Garden and a garden of native fruit and nut trees. Birds, butterflies and dragonflies are already beginning to call these gardens “home” and as the gardens mature more native fauna will see these gardens as a welcome respite.

From the beginning, this project was designed to showcase public art and over time, pieces will be added. Aside from the art of the natural landscape, stepping stones from a community art project have been installed in the crushed granite path and two art pieces have been recently installed. The stepping stones are placed along the path in the Prairie Fire Garden and the other two pieces, are a labyrinth and a fountain head piece.

Water and the water environment is the central feature of the Village Green, highlighted by a central fountain and pools that gently cascade into the lower basin. The challenge for local artist Jennifer Meyer was to create an esthetic as well as durable and safe accent to the fountain. This she has done wonderfully, taking inspiration from the flora and fauna that inhabit the site. Using only salvaged and reclaimed materials, the artist created small individual sculptures to be selectively placed on the Illinois River stone that makes up the fountain. Seven arrangements of flowers and butterflies “dance in the wind, mimicking the natural movement of outdoor botanical life”.

Designed by Paul Vicari, the materials used in the labyrinth tell the story of Park Forest and its strength in diversity. The labyrinth is located on the west side of the Village Green in the fruit and nut tree garden.

Path of Resilience



“The labyrinth is not a maze or a puzzle to be solved but a path of meaning to be experienced.”

“When we walk inward, we carry our burdens with us. When we meditate or pray in the center, we ask for grace, forgiveness, and understanding. When we walk the path outward, we are lighter, we are more joyful, and we are ready again to take on life challenges.”

~ Alex N. Pattakos, Ph.D.



Diversity Within the Community



The granite street pavers, harvested from Maxwell Street, Chicago, are from the late 19th century. Each is naturally unique, displaying a variety of colors, shapes, and sizes.

Each paver has weathered differently, with some appearing perfect and some having hidden cracks -- much like people. And much like a strong community, as one walks the path inward, the stones become more closely knit, telling the story of Park Forest, its resilience, and its diversity.

