

Lake Forest

Lake Forest, an enchanting, family-centered community, is located 31 miles north of the Loop. It is known for its winding, tree-lined streets, distinctive and stately homes and some of the best schools in Illinois. Incorporated in 1861, Lake Forest's first residents were determined that the city's trees, ravines and bluffs be protected from future development. They were so impressed with the area's natural beauty that they designed the village to co-exist with the natural landmarks.

The city has improved the west business district with a new Milwaukee Road train station, a larger fire station, light signals, winding roads and Setters Square, a park-like area in front of the new train station. Retail shopping includes a mix of small shops, family-owned businesses and larger stores, such as Talbots. The famed Market Square, built in 1916, was the first planned shopping mall in the country. The square, which still retains a nostalgic turn-of-the-century ambience, serves as a site for events, such as the Deer Path Art League's annual "Fall Festival of Art."

The parks department operates seven community parks, a beautiful, immaculate beach, with a boat launch area, and an 18-hole golf course. A bi-monthly newsletter, Dialogue! Lake Forest, keeps residents informed about virtually all local events.

The Gorton Community Center offers programs for all ages through the recreation department, including fine arts and performing arts classes and sports classes and teams. Senior citizens are offered an extensive range of programs and activities designed solely for them.

Housing. Homes in Lake Forest are generally custom-built and feature large lot sizes. Styles are traditional and include Colonials, Tudors, Victorians and ranches.

Schools. Lake Forest's public elementary students attend district 67, which has four kindergarten through third grade schools, a middle school and one junior high. The pupil-teacher ratio in district 67 is 24:1. Lake Forest High School, district 115, has undergone substantial improvements. Recent construction/renovation of the high school resulted in the addition of a new academic wing with 21 teaching classrooms, six science laboratory classrooms and four science prep rooms, new choral and band rooms and a 140-seat multi-purpose studio theater. Lake Forest Country Day School, St. Mary's, Woodlands Academy and Lake Forest Academy are all private schools located in the area.

Transportation. The Tri-State Tollway (I-94) borders Lake Forest on the west; Skokie Highway (U.S. 41) and Waukegan Road (I-43) run within city. Drive time to the Loop is an hour. O'Hare Airport is 30 minutes away; while Midway is a 45-minute drive. Milwaukee Road rail commuters have two Lake Forest stations to choose from and reach the Loop in 44 minutes express, 63 minutes on the local. Residents may also take the Metra train into the Loop.