



**CHICAGO  
REGION  
TREES  
INITIATIVE**

Our Trees.  
Our Communities.  
Our Future.

# Forestry Recognition Award Nomination Form

## PARTNERSHIPS FOR SUCCESS CATAGORY

Nominee Organization(S): Village of Riverwoods, Riverwoods Preservation Council, Riverwoods Residents Association Plant Committee

Person Nominating: Michael Clayton, President, Riverwoods Preservation Council  
Phone: 847 867 0947

1. Please explain why you think this individual or organization should receive a **2015 Chicago Region Tree Initiative Forestry Recognition Award**.
2. Include actions this individual or organization has taken, problems overcome, results seen and perceived long term impact.
3. Explain why you think this individual or organization is an example that others can follow.
4. Please keep explanation to 1,000 words or less.
5. Use a font of 11 or larger and double space. Margins should be 1".

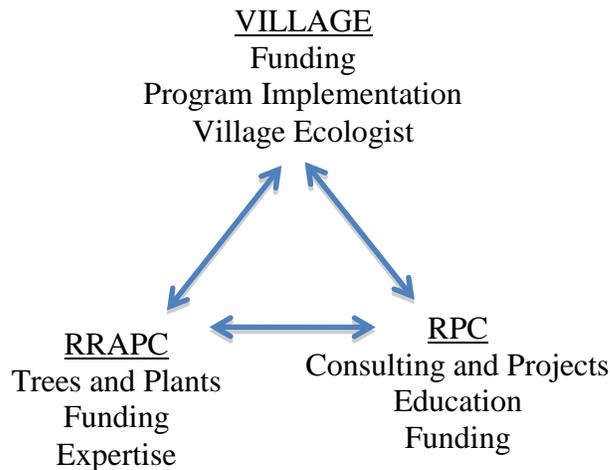
Submit nominations to Melissa Custic at [mcustic@mortonarb.org](mailto:mcustic@mortonarb.org) by June 15, 2015, 5:00 pm. You may also mail nominations to Melissa at The Morton Arboretum, 4100 IL Route 53, Lisle, IL 60532. All mailed nominations must be postmarked no later than June 12, 2015.

## **The Partnership**

The Village of Riverwoods (Village), while small (approximately 3000 homes), encompasses a diverse set of natural environments including large areas of upland woodlands, flatwoods, and floodplain forest. The Village is bordered by the Des Plaines River, the Ryerson Conservation Area, and Lake County Forest Preserves. Within the Village are the Patterson Nature Preserve (17 wooded acres along the Des Plaines restricted to being maintained in its “present wild and wooded condition”), and the Rivenberg Property (11 acre woodland conservancy). Some areas within the Village are possible natural remnants.

The Riverwoods Preservation Council (RPC) is an all-volunteer, resident-run 501c(3) corporation dedicated to preserving the Village’s native woodlands and ecological heritage. The President of the RPC sits on the Village Mayor’s consulting staff, which formally meets every other week, and the organization regularly advises the Village on ecological matters. The RPC raises funds for its own projects (including a 2009 Woodland Health Study) or to augment Village funds on ecologically related projects. The RPC has been instrumental in the development of the Village’s unique woodland ordinances and cost sharing programs. Finally, the RPC conducts annual ongoing public education programs.

The Riverwoods Residents Association Plant Committee (RRAPC) provides volunteers to plant and maintain community native garden areas within the Village and conducts an annual Native Plant Sale. The Plant Sale emphasizes forbs, shrubs, understory trees, and canopy trees that are native to the area woodlands. The Village provides cost sharing for the trees and shrubs. A portion of the funds raised is donated to the RPC. Finally, the RRAPC often consults with residents on the stewardship of their woodland property.



### Accomplishments

The Partnership is ongoing and has a continuum of accomplishments:

- In 2003, the Village adopted a tree ordinance which declared trees to be “an important public resource enhancing the quality of life...”. Among other things, the ordinance requires the approval of the Village Forester for any type of tree work, specifies the size and types of trees subject to restrictions and replacement, and imposes strict penalties for violations.
- In 2005, the Village adopted an ordinance designed to protect at least 70% of the Village’s existing woodlands. Called the Woodland Protection Ordinance, it includes trees, understory shrubs, ground plants, and other vegetation.
- Utilizing a 50% cost share with the Village, the RRAPC has sold over 300 native trees and 500 native shrubs to Riverwoods residents in the last three years.
- The Village has the following cost sharing (generally 50/50) programs related to woodlands:
  - Garlic mustard removal

- Buckthorn removal
- Canopy thinning
- Rain gardens
- Prescribed burns
- Woodland restoration (notably provides a 50/50 cost share up to a limit of \$2000 to replace damaged or missing woodland plants or to create a woodland with native canopy, understory, shrub, and ground plantings)
- Village Forester/Ecologist consultation (\$50 – a general assessment of the trees and other plants on the property)

To date, roughly 10 % of the homes within the woodland areas of the Village have utilized these programs.

- In addition to helping formulate the ordinances and programs above, the RPC has conducted educational programs on native plants, natural landscaping, water management, habitat restoration, canopy thinning, and prescribed burns. RPC volunteers helped with the design and implementation of a demonstration woodland restoration site on Village property with signage and an education shelter.
- When the Village took up the issue of the impact of deer on the local woodlands, the RPC played a significant role in the discussions and drafting of a deer fence ordinance subsequently adopted by the Village. (The Village does not currently employ deer population management). The ordinance may be the only one of its kind in the U.S.
- The RPC wrote and published a comprehensive 128 page guide entitled “In Our Own Backyard, A Guide to the Pleasures, Possibilities, and Responsibilities of Living in Harmony With Nature”. The Village distributes a copy to every new resident of Riverwoods. The RPC sells the guide through its website and the Chicago Botanic Garden.

## **Implementation**

It is difficult to capture all the accomplishments of an ongoing working and funding relationship built on a platform of professional respect and commitment. For others to get started however, all that is needed is a concerned, involved volunteer citizenry and Village government officials willing to involve that citizenry in woodland ecology matters. Any local government can emulate this partnership.

More information on the Village and RPC is available on the Village website ([www.villageofriverwoods.com](http://www.villageofriverwoods.com)) and the RPC website ([riverwoodsrpc.org](http://riverwoodsrpc.org)).