



Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street
Chicago, IL

Legislation Text

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PROPOSED RESOLUTION

A RESOLUTION TO COMMEMORATE THE VILLAGE OF LEMONT'S SESQUICENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY

WHEREAS The period between 1832 and 1850 became known as the Trail of Tears with Native Americans forced from their homes and relocated to reservations west of the Mississippi River; and

WHEREAS The first settlers arrived in what is now the Village of Lemont in 1833. Known then as Athens, its development began along the site of the Illinois & Michigan Canal which flows through the town. The canal, begun in 1836 and completed in 1848, linked the Illinois River and Lake Michigan, creating a direct waterway to the Mississippi River; and

WHEREAS Canal digging revealed "Athens Marble" a form of Niagaran Dolomite, which made the Village of Lemont famous for its quarries. Used for the canal and local construction, the easily worked rock became a major export, being used in the building of Chicago's iconic Water Tower; and

WHEREAS By 1848, The Village of Lemont's population reached 3,000 people due to many immigrants from New England or Ohio border towns making their way in search of work, with the unskilled laborers being newly arrived Irish, German, Scandinavians, plus French and English Canadians fleeing poverty and political persecution, who came looking for a new life; and

WHEREAS Language and cultural differences led to segregation among the immigrant populations in the community, so they created individual parishes for worship in their native tongue and to build community. These unique parishes became the Village of Lemont's "Seven Steeples"; and

WHEREAS The Village of Lemont's motto is "Village of Faith", and its church spires and temple reflect the many ethnic groups who came here to quarry stone, dig the Sanitary and Ship Canal and work in other industries; and

WHEREAS The Village of Lemont's Old Stone Church, built of limestone in 1861 was used as a recruiting depot for the Union Army during the American Civil War and is credited with being the largest recruiting station; and

WHEREAS Completing the I&M Canal and the construction of the Chicago & Alton and Santa Fe rail lines between the 1850s and 1890s helped create the routes responsible for the growth of Chicago and Illinois; and played a big part in the town's history by bringing workers to the area as The Village of Lemont became an important cattle, grain and dairy shipping point; and

WHEREAS During World War II, the Metallurgical Laboratory of the University of Chicago moved into Red Gate Woods to carry out Enrico Fermi's work on nuclear reactors for the Manhattan Project; and

WHEREAS After the war, Argonne National Laboratory was designated as the first national laboratory in the United States on July 1, 1946; and

WHEREAS The Village of Lemont was incorporated on June 9, 1873, when an election was held to decide whether the citizens should organize the territory as a village and the question passed overwhelmingly; and

WHEREAS The Village of Lemont is historically significant for its role in transforming the northern region of the state from a sparsely settled frontier to a commercial, agricultural, and industrial region that supplied Chicago and areas beyond with commodities; and

WHEREAS The Village of Lemont stands as one of the oldest American communities in northeastern Illinois; being unique in boasting an authentic historic district that remains intact and has been continually used since the 19th century; and

WHEREAS In 2016, the Village of Lemont Downtown Historic District was listed on the National Register of Historic Places; and

WHEREAS The Village of Lemont is commemorating its 150th anniversary of incorporation and has a lot to celebrate in 2023;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: that Cook County Commissioner Sean M. Morrison and the entire Cook County Board extends its heartiest congratulations and well-wishes to the Village of Lemont on their 150th year of incorporation, wishing them continued success in all the years to come; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a suitable copy of this Resolution be spread upon the official proceedings of this Honorable Body and that an official copy of the same be tendered to The Village of Lemont.