



**Village Manager's Report**  
**Week ending September 29, 2017**

**Meetings scheduled for the next week:**

- Monday, October 2:
  - Executive Session, 6:30 p.m., room 130
  - Village Board Special Meeting, 7:30 p.m., room 201
- Tuesday, October 3:
  - No meetings scheduled
- Wednesday, October 4:
  - Citizen Involvement Commission, 7 p.m., room 101
  - Zoning Building of Appeals Commission, 7 p.m., room 201
  - Madison Street Coalition, 2 p.m., room 201
- Friday, October 6:
  - No meetings scheduled

**Police program gets broader attention** – The Oak Park Police Department's use of simple silicon bracelets to raise awareness of mental health was featured this week in a story on Chicago's NBC affiliate, WMAQ-TV. In a feature that first aired Thursday (Sept. 28), School Resource Officer Kevin Collins, who worked with District 97 teachers and the Township's Mental Health Board to create the program, and Chief Anthony Ambrose were featured in the story by reporter Regina Waldroup, an Oak Park resident who saw the [story in the OP/FYI newsletter](#) and recognized the potential for a wider audience. You can view the NBC-5 report online – [just click here](#).

**New business openings** – The year is shaping up to be an active one for new business openings in Oak Park. Nine new businesses have opened since February, including seven new food service establishments. Another seven businesses are on the cusp of opening, including five serving food. The biggest anticipated new business opening is Target, but the final date has not yet been announced. So far this year, nearly 70,000 feet of new commercial space has opened. [Click here to read a report on the details about each new and planned business opening for the year...](#)

**High School garage repair** – Staff has been working closely with administrators from Oak Park and River Forest High School to prepare for the impact of repairs scheduled for the public on-campus garage. At the request of the high school, work will not start until Oct. 4 to avoid any issues for parent/teacher conferences already scheduled for earlier in the week. In addition to temporarily lifting on-street parking restrictions on surrounding neighborhood streets, faculty and staff will be allowed to share nearby underutilized spaces designated for students as well as have 250 barcoded passes

for free parking in the Avenue Garage. Letters have gone out to all of the high school's neighbors alerting them to the likelihood of an unusual number of vehicles parked on the streets. The work is expected to take up to eight weeks, barring any unusual weather delays. The construction schedule includes maintaining at least 50 spaces within the garage, with additional spaces opened if possible as the work progresses.

**Lack of rain impacting trees** – While the recent wave of 90-degree temperatures may be over, the Chicago area is on track to record its fourth-driest September on record. Our trees are displaying the impact of the near-drought conditions, according to the Village Forester, who said leaves changing color and falling earlier than is typical for the season is indicative of low moisture levels in the soil. These conditions also mean residents have already begun raking their leaves into the streets well ahead of the Oct. 16 start of the annual collection program. Staff is working to discourage this practice since it can create traffic hazards and clog sewer inlets should a heavy rainfall occur. Complete details on the leaf collection program and a map indicating specific locations and dates is included in the October OP/FYI newsletter, which is already [posted on the Village website](#) and should arrive in mailboxes next week. Forestry contractors and crews are watering recently planted young trees, but are asking residents to help out with the nearly 19,000 trees on public property that we lack resources to water under current conditions.

**Downtown construction update** – Work on the crosswalks has started at the Maple Avenue and Westgate Street intersection. Light poles are being installed along Westgate Street and the south section of Maple Avenue. The sidewalk remains closed on the north side of North Boulevard by the ongoing development site, but pedestrians have access to the area via the sidewalk on the south side of the street. Light pole foundation work is set to start along North Boulevard. Concrete planters are being installed along North Boulevard and landscaping for planters on Westgate Street has begun. Westgate Street has been temporarily opened to vehicle traffic and pedestrian access is being maintained from Marion Street. The south section of Maple Avenue was paved this week. Lake Street east of Harlem Avenue was tentatively scheduled to be milled today (Fri., Sept. 29), with paving of both Lake Street and the north section of Maple Avenue to follow. Flaggers are required to be on site to ensure traffic flow is maintained during the work.

**South Boulevard/Harlem Avenue redevelopment update** – Foundation work continues at the Lincoln Properties development site on South Boulevard east of Harlem Avenue. The eastbound lane of South Boulevard is closed between Harlem Avenue and Marion Street and likely will remain so throughout much of the project to provide space for materials staging and construction equipment. Engineering Division staff continues to work with the contractor to ensure access to the businesses on South Boulevard is not obstructed.

**Street resurfacing** – Concrete operations continued on Wisconsin Avenue between Madison and Randolph streets and on Randolph Street between Harlem and Wisconsin avenues. Landscaping crews began work on Humphrey Avenue between Division and Greenfield streets, and on Taylor Avenue between Berkshire and

Greenfield streets. Asphalt was removed and a new layer installed on South Boulevard between Cuyler and Harvey avenues, on Pleasant Street between Ridgeland and Harvey avenues, and on Superior Street between Elmwood and East avenues. Asphalt work will continue throughout next week at these sites as well as on Wisconsin Avenue between Madison and Randolph streets and on Randolph Street between Harlem and Wisconsin avenues.

**Washington/Wisconsin traffic signal** – Work continues on site preparation for the new traffic signal at the intersection of Washington Street and Wisconsin Avenue even though the tentative November activation date likely will be delayed as manufacturers shift inventory to hurricane recovery efforts. Crews will complete all of the above ground and underground work, then may have to suspend the final installation tasks until the inventory situation improves. In addition to the new signal, the project also includes dedicated turn lanes on Washington Boulevard. Traffic can pass safely through the work zone.

**Lake Michigan pipeline project** – The water main to carry Lake Michigan water to the villages of Brookfield and North Riverside has been completed beyond Lombard Avenue, as work progresses to the east toward Austin Boulevard. The underground pipe should be installed through Oak Park by early October. Street reconstruction activities along the pipeline route are underway with new curbs, sidewalks, alley entrances and driveway aprons being replaced between Euclid and Ridgeland avenues. A project website managed by the engineering company posts the latest schedule information – [click here to view](#).

**Miscellaneous construction projects** – Crews continued with cleanup, repair and replacement of new sidewalk sections that were damaged or vandalized during construction. Street microsurfacing is substantially complete, with only application of pavement markings remaining. Union Pacific Railroad crews completed work on the retaining walls where tracks pass over Village streets. Repairs to the overpass at North Boulevard and Oak Park Avenue have been completed. Engineering Division staff will coordinate with the Arts Council to determine if the mural that was removed should be repainted.

**Public Works activities** – Streets Division crews worked with the Police Department to remove bicycles abandoned on racks at various locations in the Village. Crews also picked up litter in public parking lots and business districts, removed graffiti from a public sidewalk and painted curbs on various streets south of I-290. Water & Sewer Division crews repaired water main breaks at Washington Boulevard and Lombard Avenue, Oak Park Avenue and Iowa Street, and Elmwood Avenue at Fillmore Street. Crews also repaired a catch basin at 162 N. Lombard Ave. and completed a water service upgrade at 1156 Wesley Ave. as part of the lead abatement program. Street Lighting Division crews repaired a traffic signal mast arm damaged in a vehicle accident at Ridgeland Avenue and Division Street, and replaced traffic signal heads damaged in a vehicle accident at Ridgeland Avenue and Madison Street.

**Employee news** -- Veteran Village employee Keith Lewis has moved to the Streets Division of the Public Works Department where he will be an equipment operator.

Keith has been with the Village for more than 13 years, working as a water meter reader in the Finance Department and later transferring to the Water & Sewer Division of the Public Works Department. Former Environmental Services Manager Karen Rozmus may have retired, but she has continued to earn recognition for her efforts on behalf of the Village. Karen was named *Recycler of the Year* by the [Illinois Recycling Association](#) at its annual meeting earlier this month in Champaign.

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