

2015 budget to focus on improving streets and alleys

In the 113th year since its incorporation, the Village will launch an aggressive capital improvement program that will focus on improving vital public infrastructure, especially streets and alleys.

The 2015 budget marks the start of an historic initiative to invest an additional \$20 million over the next five years in the Village's vital community transportation network and other needs like the water and sewer systems.

Oak Park has more than 600 alleys and 240 lane miles of streets, many in need of major repair. As available funds have waned over the past several years, repair efforts have fallen behind community needs and expectations, a situation this new emphasis on capital improvements intends to remedy.

To fund this aggressive program to improve alleys and streets the Village will issue general obligation bonds to spread the cost of repayment over a 20-year period. Improvements to be made will have a long life. For example, asphalt typically lasts for about 20 years, while concrete can last 50 years and brick up to 70 years.

Officials are relying on increased user fees to fund the multi-year program. This approach, which ties costs to use, gives individuals greater control over how much they pay.

Beginning Jan. 1, the monthly cost for a 64-gallon refuse cart will rise \$1.50 to \$19.60 and the cost for a 96-gallon refuse cart will increase \$2.50 to \$23.88. Green yard waste stickers will remain \$2.40 and pink bulk refuse stickers \$2.

Each year, Oak Parkers send more 13,000 tons of garbage to landfills, recycle more than 6,000 tons of materials and put more than 1,400 tons of yard waste out of collection. Reducing any of these numbers can help reduce costs related to these essential services.

Plans also are in the works to improve the Village's 105 miles of water lines and 110 miles of sewer, much of which are nearly a century old. Bonds will help fund this work as well and will be supported by increases in fees users can help control.

Beginning Jan. 1, the combined rate for water and sewer service will rise \$1.24 to \$10.76 per 1,000 gallons of water used. Residential customers will be assessed a \$5 monthly service charge, while commercial customers

will be charged a flat rate of up to \$15 per month depending on the size of the service connection. The flat fee provides for basic water service, while the volume charge is a true user fee.

Oak Park, like most of the region's municipalities, buys its water from the City of Chicago. The \$6 million the Village typically pays Chicago each year is just for the five-plus million gallons of water Oak Parkers consume every day. The Village is responsible for

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Ways to Save

Smaller carts – Oak Parkers who opt for a refuse cart the same size as the recycling cart can save \$4.28 per month, or \$12.84 on each quarterly bill under the new rate structure. About a third of residences served by the Village hauling contractor have chosen this option since it was first offered in 2004. Additional recycling bins are available at no cost. Call 708.358.5700 or email publicworks@oak-park.us for more information.

Composting – More than 700 Oak Park households are participating in the Village's composting program *CompostAble*, which reduces the amount of organic waste like table scraps and food-soiled containers that otherwise would end up in the refuse container. While the program does have an additional cost – \$14 per month – neighbors can share a cart. Participants also can use the composting cart for yard waste, eliminating the need to buy bags and stickers for disposal. Call 708.358.5700 or email composting@oak-park.us for more information.

Conserving water – Because Oak Park relies on Lake Michigan water, much of the cost consumers pay is beyond the control of local government. But how much water a household uses can be managed through conservation. The Village adopted a water conservation plan in 2013, with the focus first on helping the community's largest users – schools and hospitals – reduce their use. But individuals also can take steps to use less water and reduce bills. Simple moves like turning off the water while brushing teeth, installing low-flow showerheads and using the quick wash option on a dishwasher can significantly reduce indoor water use. Watering plants in the mornings to reduce evaporation and installing rain barrels to collect free water can help reduce outdoor use. More water conservation tips are posted at www.oak-park.us/conservewater.



Embracing diversity helps define the character of Oak Park

Oak Park was one of the first municipalities in the country to make diversity a matter of public policy. Following each two-year election cycle since a Diversity Statement was first adopted in 1973, the Village Board demonstrates its support of the high ideals embodied in the statement by reaffirming its content via a formal resolution. With a focus on differences defining much of the current dialogue in the United States and the world, residents are invited to read the words that have helped define Oak Park and consider their broader intent...

Diversity Statement

The people of Oak Park choose this community, not just as a place to live, but as a way of life. Oak Park has committed itself to equality not only because it is legal, but because it is right; not only because equality is ethical, but because it is desirable for us and our children. Ours is a dynamic community that encourages the contributions of all citizens, regardless of race, color, ethnicity, ancestry, national origin, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital and/or familial status, mental and/or physical impairment and/or disability, military status, economic class, political affiliation, or any of the other distinguishing characteristics that all too often divide people in society.

Oak Park's proud tradition of citizen involvement and accessible local government challenge us to show others how such a community can embrace change while still respecting and preserving the best of the past. Creating a mutually respectful, multicultural environment does not happen on its own; it must be intentional. Our goal is for people of widely differing backgrounds to do more than live next to one another. Through interaction, we believe we can reconcile the apparent paradox of appreciating and even celebrating our differences while at the same time developing consensus on a shared vision for the future. Oak Park recognizes that a free, open, and inclusive community is achieved through full and broad participation of all its citizenry. We believe the best decisions are made when everyone is represented in decision-making and power is shared collectively.

Oak Park is uniquely equipped to accomplish these objectives, because we affirm all people as members of the human family. We reject the notion of race as a barrier dividing us and we reject prejudicial behavior towards any group of people. We believe residence in this Village should be open to anyone interested in sharing our benefits and responsibilities.

To achieve our goals, the Village of Oak Park must continue to support the Board's fair housing philosophy that has allowed us to live side-by-side and actively seek to foster unity in our community. We believe that mutual understanding among individuals of diverse backgrounds can best be attained with an attitude of reciprocal good will and increased association. The Village of Oak Park commits itself to a future ensuring equal access, full participation in all of the Village's institutions and programs, and equality of opportunity in all Village operating policies. The success of this endeavor prepares us to live and work in the twenty-first century.

It is our intention that such principles will be a basis for policy and decision making in Oak Park. The President and Board of Trustees of the Village of Oak Park reaffirm their dedication and commitment to these precepts.

- Adopted in 1973

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Discrimination complaints

Since 1968, Village Code has defended the rights of individuals within the protected classes of race, sex, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, veteran status, sexual orientation, age, marital status, familial status or disability in the purchasing, leasing, securing a loan, renting or occupying housing or other real estate. Any person otherwise qualified who is denied or discriminated against in these processes should call 708.358.5407 or email community@oak-park.us for more information, conciliation or to file a formal, written complaint.

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maintaining the system that delivers the water to customers and carries the waste to the regional treatment plants.

Water, sewer and refuse hauling fees are calculated monthly, but most property owners receive quarterly bills. Payments can be made online, by mail or in-person at Village Hall, 123 Madison St.

For more information on user fee rates, visit www.oak-park.us and use the key word search, or email finance@oak-park.us.

Toilet rebates offered

Residents who install low-flow toilets with the WaterSense label may qualify for a \$100 rebate. The program, funded by the Oak Park River Forest Community Foundation and administered by the Village, will offer rebates to about 50 single-family households. For details, call 708.358.5410 or email housing@oak-park.us.

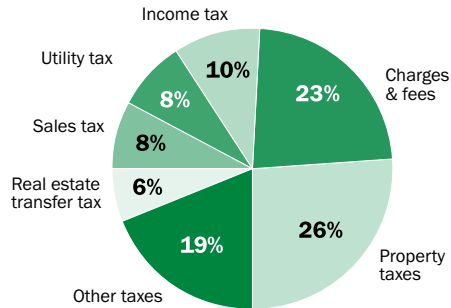


Free water-saving kits available

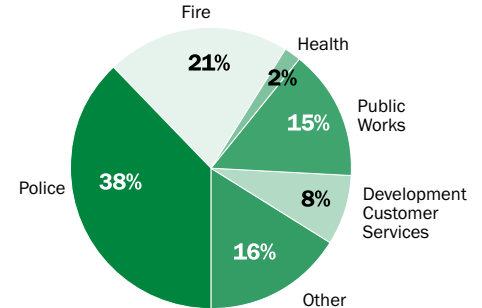
Oak Parkers interested in saving water and energy are eligible for free water saver kits that can save up to 57 gallons of water per person per day. Each kit contains a low-flow shower head, low-flow kitchen and bath faucet aerators, and a toilet tank displacement device that can make any toilet a low-flow unit. Kits may not be mailed and must be picked up in person at the Neighborhood Services Division office in Village Hall, 123 Madison St. Email housing@oak-park.us for more information.

2015 Village budget at a glance

WHERE THE MONEY COMES FROM



WHERE THE MONEY GOES



HOW PROPERTY TAXES ARE DISTRIBUTED



Voter registration underway

Voter registration is underway for new residents as well as Oak Parkers who have a new address and wish to vote in the April municipal election. Registration is available from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, through March 10, at Village Hall, 123 Madison St. Voter registration also is offered at the Oak Park Township, 105 S. Oak Park Ave. and the main branch of the Oak Park Library, 834 Lake St. Registration requires two pieces of identification. Neither needs to be a photo ID, but one must include the current address. Acceptable forms of identification include an Illinois driver's license, state identification card, employee or student ID, credit card, Social Security card, birth certificate, utility bill in applicant's name, mail postmarked to the applicant, valid U.S. passport, lease or rental contract. The biennial municipal election will be on Tues., April 7, when voters will choose three Village Trustees and members of the Park Board, Library Board, D200 High School Board and D97 Elementary School District Board. For more information on voter registration and local elections, call 708.358.5670, email clerk@oak-park.us or visit www.cookcountyclerk.com.

Warming centers open

Warming centers are open from 5:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. at West Suburban Medical Center, Erie Street at Austin Boulevard, and from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Rush Oak Park Hospital, 500 S. Maple Ave. Hours may be extended when weather conditions warrant. To find out if the warming center is open after hours, call West Suburban Hospital at 708.763.6747 or Rush Oak Park Hospital at 708.660.6000. If transportation is needed, call the Oak Park Police Department's non-emergency number 708.386.3800. Village Hall, 123 Madison St., also is a warming center from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Awards recognize property stewardship efforts

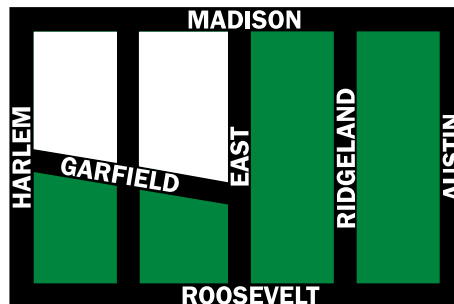
Thirty-five projects that embraced and exemplified commitment to protecting and furthering Oak Park's heritage and pride in the community were recognized by the Historic Preservation, Environment & Energy and Community Design commissions. Historic Preservation Awards were presented for seven projects and Green Awards went to nine projects. The Community Design Commission's Cavalcade of Pride awards also were presented for 17 properties whose owners were deemed to have done an exceptional job of maintaining and improving the exteriors of their homes and businesses.

- **Historic Preservation Awards** – John and Laura Connelly, 208 S. Cuyler Ave.; Nineteenth Century Charitable Association, 178 Forest Ave.; Wesley and Kate McMillan, 239 S. Grove Ave.; Mike and Beverly Kralovec, 309 Linden Ave.; Patricia Vizzone and Ken Vizzone, 212 N. Lombard Ave.; Interfaith Housing Development Corporation – Grove Apartments, 442 S. Grove Ave.; 106 Partners LLC., 100-106 S. Oak Park Ave.
- **Green Awards** – Harvey House Bed and Breakfast; West Cook Wild Ones; Amanda Hendrixson; Stephanie Walquist; Jocelyne Adkins; Euclid Avenue United Methodist Church; Honorable Mention – The Carleton Hotel; Honorable Mention – Oak Park Apartments.
- **Cavalcade of Pride Awards** – Soraya Asadi and Benjamin Ling, 930 N. Grove Ave.; Carrie and Ken Brinkman, 700 Columbian Ave.; Kelly and Cliff Beringer, 824 N. Humphrey Ave.; Mary Gerard & Linas Smulkstys, 333 Wisconsin Ave.; Nancy and Mark Filoramo, 619 Pleasant St.; Rogene Tubman and Scott Tindale, 165 N. Harvey Ave.; Sarah and Timothy Cooke, 1023 Wenonah Ave.; Lynn and James Grogan, 639 S. Elmwood Ave.; Angie and Bob Weszely, 633 S. Lombard Ave.; Interfaith Housing Development Corporation – Grove Apartments, 442 S. Grove Ave.; Karen and Thomas Rafter, 231-233 N. Elmwood Ave.; Diana Condo Association, 142 S. Cuyler Ave.; Rosemary Weil, 1210 N. Grove Ave.; Oak Leyden Development Services, 411 Chicago Ave.; Park District of Oak Park – Ridgeland Common, 415 Lake St.; Park District of Oak Park – Cheney Mansion, 220 N. Euclid Ave.; Serrelli's Finer Foods, 6454 W. North Ave., Chicago.

For more information on the awards, email planning@oak-park.us.

Plans readied for winter tree pruning cycle

Private contractors will be pruning trees through March in the south and southeast areas of the Village. The winter pruning cycle will follow the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) guidelines for tree care to address three key issues – tree health, resident safety and protecting property from damage. Crews will be removing dead or dying limbs as well as thinning out and raising the canopy to allow for safe vehicle and pedestrian traffic and create appropriate clearances for adjacent structures and signs. While the pruning may appear excessive during winter when no leaves are on the limbs, crews will make sure the pruning is just right as foliage returns in the spring. With a program that aims to prune every tree on public property once every four years, plans must consider that the medium-aged trees that compose a major share of those on Oak Park parkways can grow up to two feet each year – or eight feet between pruning cycles. The Village's pruning program helps minimize storm damage and reduce ongoing pruning requests. Village Forestry crews will be spot checking progress of the private contractors. Residents who have any questions or concerns about the type or quality of work being performed by contractors are urged to call 708.358.5700.



Winter pruning in the south and southeast areas of the Village are indicated in green.

Clip and Save

Who to Call

Dial Direct (area code 708)

Village Hall	oak-park.us
TTY	711
Adjudication	358.5479
Development Customer Services	358.5420
Business Services	358.5425
Neighborhood Services	358.5410
Housing	option 1
CDBG	option 2
Property complaints	option 3
Permits & Inspections	358.5430
Planning	358.5440
General questions	option 1
Historic Preservation	option 2
Zoning	option 3
Finance	358.5460
Utility Billing Inquiries	358.5478
Fire (nonemergency)	358.5600
Human Resources	358.5650
Job Hotline	358.5650
Police (nonemergency)	386.3800
Crime Tip Hotline	434.1636
Public Health	358.5480
Animal Control	358.5680
Public Works	358.5700
Parking	358.7275
Day Parking Passes	option 3
Extended Pass	option 4
Parking Permits	option 5
Snow Hotline	option 1
Vehicle Stickers	option 5
Village Board	358.5784
Village Clerk	358.5670
Village Manager's Office	358.5770

EMERGENCIES 911

Park District	www.pdop.org
Administration	725.2017
Customer Service	725.2000
Building & Grounds	725.2050
Business Operations	725.2015

Public Library	www.oppl.org
Main Library	383.8200
Maze Branch	386.4751
Dole Branch	386.9032

School District 97	www.op97.org
Administration	524.3000

School District 200	www.oprfhs.org
Administration	434.3107

Township	www.oakparktownship.org
Senior Services	383.8060
Youth Services	445.2727
General Assistance	383.8005
Assessor Services	383.8005
Mental Health Board	358.8855

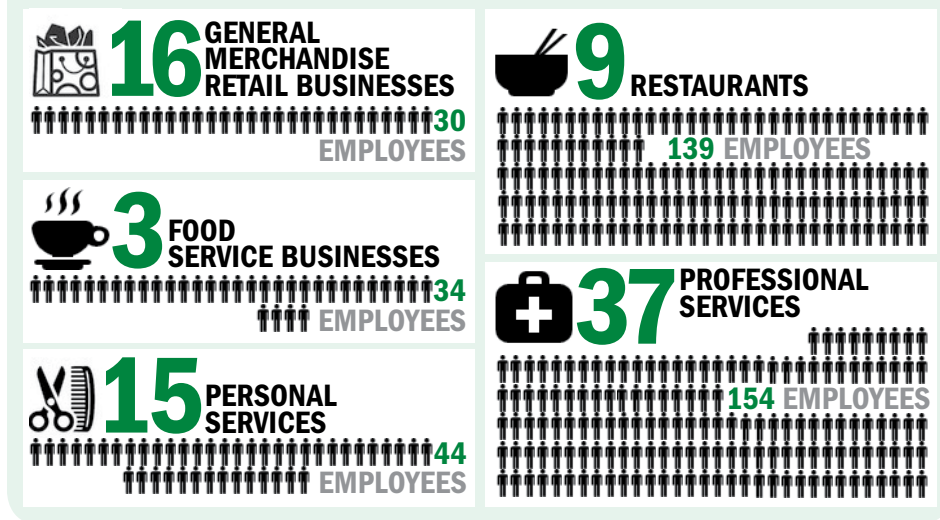
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- youtube.com/vopnews

2014 an active time for business investment

The year just passed was an active one for business investment in Oak Park, with more than \$2.3 million spent by newcomers and current operators who relocated to improve their operations. The 60 new businesses that chose Oak Park in 2014 occupied 93,000 square feet of commercial space and generated 300-plus new employment opportunities. Another 20 existing businesses chose to reinvest in the community at a new or expanded location, keeping some 100 jobs in the Village. The demographics of Oak Park residents continued to appeal to a broad range of business types including general merchandise retailers, food service operators, restaurants and a wide assortment of professional and personal services organizations.

2014 Business Investments



Volunteers needed for A Day in Our Village

June may seem like a long way from January, but planning already is well underway for the 42nd annual A Day in Our Village, Oak Park's annual festival celebrating diversity and community involvement. This year's event is scheduled for Sun., June 7. A variety of volunteers are needed to help promote and staff the event, which includes activity booths representing Oak Park civic, cultural, social service, educational, religious and business organizations, as well as demonstrations, entertainment and food provided by local restaurants. Anyone interested in volunteering — or more information — is urged to call 708.358.5407 or email community@oak-park.us.

Crime free housing training set

Mandatory seminars for rental property owners to learn more about the Village's Crime Free Housing Program will be offered in January. The program, which gives rental property owners and managers a powerful tool to help reduce the chances of criminal activity in individual rented units, requires all rental property owners to:

- Attend an annual Crime Free Housing Seminar
 - Obtain an annual Residential Rental License for each rental property
 - Include the Crime Free Lease Addendum with all rental property leases
- Pre-registration is required. Visit www.oak-park.us/rentalseminar to sign up. Owners without computer access can register by calling 708.358.5410.

Applications accepted for sewer backup protection grants

Applications are now being accepted for financial assistance to install an overhead sewer or a backflow prevention system to protect homes from backup during a heavy rain event. Eligible homeowners may qualify for a grant of 50 percent of the total cost of sewer backup prevention improvements, up to a maximum of \$3,500. Anyone who meets the program guidelines can apply, regardless of income. Details on the program, including the application materials, are posted at www.oak-park.us — just search sewer grant. For more information, call 708.358.5410 or email housing@oak-park.us.

Make multi-family housing smoke-free

Property managers, owners and condo boards interested in creating smoke-free buildings can get help through the Health Department's *Breathe Easy Oak Park* program. The program offers a range of materials on how to transition to a smoke-free property, including sample letters for tenants and lease addendums. No-smoking policies encourage healthier living and a safer environment, help make the building more durable, reduce operating costs and improve air quality. *Breathe Easy Oak Park* is funded under the Illinois Department of Public Health *Tobacco Free Communities Grant Program*, which provides funding to certified local health departments for programs to reduce exposure to secondhand smoke. For more information call 708.358.5486 or email health@oak-park.us.

Quit smoking help

If you need help kicking the smoking habit, you may want to consider nicotine replacement patches. Free patches are available through the Illinois Department of Public Health Tobacco Free Communities fund. Residents age 18 and over are eligible. To register, call the Illinois Quitline at 866.784.8937. Information also is posted at www.quityes.org.



Village President Anan Abu-Taleb

Trustees
 Peter Barber
 Glenn Brewer
 Adam Salzman
 Colette Lueck
 Bob Tucker

Village Clerk Teresa Powell
Village Manager Cara Pavlicek

Residential Customer Local
 Oak Park, Illinois

Village of Oak Park
 Village Hall
 123 Madison Street
 Oak Park, Illinois 60302-4272



Postal Carrier
 Pre-Sort

Permit No. 26
 Oak Park, IL
PAID
 U.S. Postage
 Standard
 Presort

Sidewalk shoveling required

Property owners who shovel their sidewalks are doing more than making it safer for pedestrians of all ages — they also are complying with the law. Village ordinance requires snow and ice to be removed from the public sidewalk within 24 hours following any snow, sleet or freezing rain. Being a good neighbor is important, too, so property owners are urged to help those who may need help clearing a sidewalk. For more information on the shoveling requirement or help resources, call 708.358.5700 or email publicworks@oakpark.us.

Forecast key to planning parking when it snows

The Village has specific rules that govern parking when it snows — rules that are enforced seven days a week, including holidays. Residents are urged to monitor local forecasts and plan accordingly. When a snow emergency is declared by the Public Works Department, all parking is prohibited on the main streets posted as snow routes. Parking on other streets is restricted to one side from 8 a.m. until 10 p.m. in residential areas and from midnight to 8 a.m. in designated commercial districts, the side determined by the odd/even date. To find out if snow-related parking restrictions are in effect, call 708.358.7669 for a recorded message. Cable television subscribers can tune into VOP-TV, broadcast on Comcast channel 6 and AT&T channel 99. Residents who sign up at www.oak-park.us/notifyme will be alerted. Efforts also will be made to post timely information to social media sites www.facebook.com/vopnews and twitter.com/vopnews. The snow emergency parking rules and a list of frequently asked questions also are posted at www.oak-park.us/parking.

Holiday tree pick up scheduled

Holiday trees will be picked up on regular trash and recycling collection days during the weeks of January 5 and 12. Please follow these guidelines:

- Place trees in the regular collection area next to the refuse cart — only residents with no alley should put trees at the curb.
- Remove all tinsel, decorations and stands.
- Do not put tree in plastic disposal bag.
- Place wreaths and garlands in the refuse cart — they are held together with wire and not recyclable.

For more information call 708.358.5700 or email publicworks@oak-park.us.

Recycle unwanted holiday lights

The Village has partnered with Vintage Tech Recyclers to host a holiday light drop-off box at the Public Works Center, 201 South Blvd., through January. Mini-lights, C7 lights, C9 lights, rope and LED lights, as well as extension cords, are acceptable. Items may be dropped off from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through Friday. For more information call 708.358.5700 or email publicworks@oak-park.us.

Park District Winterfest set

The Park District of Oak Park's second annual Winterfest is set for 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., Sat., Jan. 31 in Austin Gardens, 167 Forest Ave. The free, family event will feature outdoor ice skating — weather permitting — as well as music and food. For more information visit www.pdop.org.

