



**Village Manager's Report
Week ending April 14, 2023**

Meetings scheduled for next week:

- Monday, April 17:
 - Building Codes Advisory Commission, 5:30 p.m. in Council Chambers
- Tuesday, April 18:
 - Community Development Citizen Advisory Commission, 6 p.m. in Room 101
 - Citizens Police Oversight Committee, 7 p.m. in Room 215
- Wednesday, April 19:
 - Citizen Involvement Commission, 7 p.m. in Room 124
- Thursday, April 20:
 - No meetings scheduled
- Friday, April 21:
 - No meetings scheduled

**COVID-19 Weekly Reports are posted at www.oak-park.us/covid19
just click on the *Status report bulletin* heading**

Sensor-based water leak detection – The Village’s sensor-based leak detection pilot program is fully implemented with 200 sensors listening to over 1/3 of the Village’s water distribution system. While these sensors need a short period of time to acclimate before they are working at full capacity, the network has already identified some confirmed and resolved leaks. There are also a number of potential leaks that will be investigated over the next few days. The system is designed to listen to the sound of the water flowing through the Village’s water mains during the quietest part of the night. Based on the sounds, the system can identify if there is a potential leak and correlate its location within the system. If the potential leak is heard for multiple nights, the system alerts staff to investigate the location and utilize additional listening devices to confirm if and where a potential leak is before excavation to repair. While still early in the six-month pilot, Public Works staff is optimistic about the value of the system.

New equity and environment initiative – The first E2 (Equity and Environment) Team meeting was held this week to discuss the goals and objectives of this new Village staff initiative spearheaded by the Village Manager’s Office. Lead by Chief DEI Officer Dr. Danielle Walker and Chief Sustainability Officer Marcella Bondie Keenan, the E2 Team has been formed to advance racial equity and environment and social justice internally among Village employees. The cross-departmental team is comprised of staff who are passionate about creating equitable outcomes, advancing their learning and building momentum around the needed synergy between equity and the environment. Training, educational opportunities for

all staff, an E2 newsletter, event planning and advancing internal equity and environmental initiatives are the primary goals of the team, which will meet regularly. Stay tuned for more on the E2 Team as it develops.

Police roll out body-worn cameras – Field officers in the Oak Park Police Department are now equipped with officer-worn body cameras. The cameras were purchased as part of a comprehensive technology platform that includes new in-car video systems and tasers. Digital evidence can be reviewed by officers, with footage and live streams viewable in one central location, making it easier to proactively respond to threats, manage evidence and get a more comprehensive picture of an incident. Due to a nationwide chip shortage, delivery of the in-car systems has been delayed until later this year. The body-worn cameras automatically activate when an officer's weapon is unholstered. Otherwise, officers must activate the cameras. Once the new in-car video systems are implemented, the recordings will become even more automated as body-worn cameras will also be activated automatically when a police vehicle reaches a certain speed or its lights are turned on. The rollout of the body-worn cameras fulfills a state law that requires law enforcement agencies to implement their use.

Green businesses bloom across Oak Park – The Oak Park Green Business Program, in partnership with the Smart Energy Design Assistance Center (SEDAC) at the University of Illinois, has provided more than 20 green assessments for local businesses to identify cost savings and ways to help the environment. Green business assessments review a business' operations, utilities and equipment to identify low to no-cost savings opportunities that benefit a business' bottom line and the environment. A report is provided that outlines unique cost and environmental savings opportunities, as well as connects businesses to utility incentive programs. Support is provided to meet recommendations outlined in the report. Beyond Properties Realty and the Downtown Oak Park Association have already reached Illinois Green Business Certification across six areas of sustainability. Four additional businesses are undergoing the certification process with the Illinois Green Business Program, which recognizes businesses for meeting over 100 sustainability practices across six core categories of environmental sustainability: Energy, Water, Waste, Pollution, Transportation and Community. Oak Park and regional restaurants were also assessed through a unique collaboration with Takeout 25 that explored how a regional green dining hub model could facilitate collective action around environmentally responsible practices. More than a dozen Oak Park restaurants are participating – [click here for more information](#). SEDAC is still accepting participants in the Oak Park Green Business Program. Interested business operators are encouraged to visit www.sustainoakpark.com/greenbusinessprogram or reach out to Cassie Carroll at ccarrol2@illinois.edu or 217.300.644 for more information.

Zoning Board of Appeals update – During its meeting this week the Zoning Board of Appeals provided a positive recommendation for the special-use petition from Comedy Plex LLC for a proposed live performance venue in the lower level of the building at 1128-1134 Lake St. The ZBA also continued its discussion about Think Big Academy Day Care's special-use petition to operate at 845-847 Madison St. to the next ZBA meeting on May 3.

Earth Month events continue - The Citizens Utility Board (CUB) is leading a workshop on ways renters and homeowners can access energy efficiency and cost saving programs at 7 p.m. on April 20 at the Oak Park Library Maze Branch, 845 Gunderson Ave. During the workshop information will be shared about new tax credits and rebates for home energy improvements available through the Inflation Reduction Act and free programs designed to save energy and money. Presenters will also discuss building decarbonization and the benefits of building electrification. [Click here to RSVP](#). Find a full list of Earth Month activities taking place in Oak Park and surrounding communities at www.sustainoakpark.com/community-events.

Village earns award for local climate plan - The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) recently announced its [2023 Regional Excellence Awards](#), and the Village and its [Climate Ready Oak Park](#) plan were recognized with the organization's Regional Resilience honor. The awards program celebrates projects and leaders who exemplify the ingenuity and dedication that makes northeastern Illinois a better place to live, enjoy, work and do business. In describing why the Village was selected for recognition, CMAP indicated that, "the Village of Oak Park provided the region with a blueprint to address a changing climate when it approved Climate Ready Oak Park, a comprehensive sustainability and resilience plan for its own community." More information about the recognition is available on the Village website - [click here to view](#).

Village receives Tree City USA honors - The Arbor Day Foundation has named the Village of Oak Park a 2022 Tree City USA in honor of its commitment to effective urban forest management. The Village also received a Tree City USA Growth Award for demonstrating environmental improvement and higher level of tree care. This is the 39th year Oak Park has been recognized as a Tree City USA and the 16th time the Village has received the Growth Award. Oak Park achieved Tree City USA recognition by meeting the program's four requirements: a forestry division, a tree ordinance, an annual community forestry budget of at least \$2 per capita and an Arbor Day observance and proclamation. One of the steps taken to earn the Growth Award was planting more trees in 2022 than were removed. Oak Park is in rare company in that nearly all of our identified open planting spots have been filled. Tools such as the Tree Equity Score are used to help prioritize filling these open planting sites. For more information about the Village's Forestry Division, visit www.oak-park.us/trees.

Community Health and Wellness Fair - The Oak Park - River Forest (OPRF) Chamber of Commerce is hosting its Community Health and Wellness Fair from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Sunday, April 23 at FFC Oak Park. The Oak Park Health Department will be among the more than 70 local health and wellness professionals on hand providing a wide range of health screenings and services during the free event. More information about the Health and Wellness Fair is available on the Chamber of Commerce website at www.oprfchamber.org/health-wellness-fair.

Electricity aggregation enrollment ongoing - The enrollment period for the Village's electricity aggregation program is underway following the extension of the Village's contract with MC Squared Energy Services, LLC (mc2). The new contract, which runs through 2025, ensures participants never pay more than the ComEd energy rate. Electricity customers who

receive a letter from the Village and MC Squared Energy Services, but already participate in the Village's Community Choice Electricity Aggregation Program, will be enrolled automatically unless they choose to opt-out by following the instructions in the letter. More information is available on the Village website – [click here to view](#).

Employee news – Jazmyne Sepulveda recently joined the Development Customer Services Department as a Customer Service Representative II in the Parking Services Division. Jazmyne previously worked in Oak Park at both the Victory Italian restaurant and at the West Cook YMCA. Prior to that, she was a Quality Audit Specialist in Texas.

What's Blooming on Harrison update – The musical entertainment for this year's What's Blooming on Harrison event in the Oak Park Arts District has been announced. [Click here](#) to see the lineup, which will be just part of the festivities when What's Blooming on Harrison takes place from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. on May 20. More information about the event is on the [Arts District website](#).

Crosswalk repairs at South and Marion – Next week crews will begin removing damaged paver crosswalks at the intersection of South Boulevard and Marion Street and replacing them with decorative concrete. South Boulevard will be closed to eastbound traffic between Harlem and Home avenues while work is ongoing. All other directions of travel will be open, but drivers should expect delays in the area. Construction is not expected to significantly impact parking. All work is expected to be wrapped up by the end of the month.

Division Street water & sewer update – The installation of the mainline watermain along Division Street at Ridgeland Avenue near Taylor Park is nearly complete. The contractor will next install pavement patches in preparation for the intersection to be reopened. Further to the west, the intersection of Division and Oak Park Avenue will be closed through the end of the month while crews install sewer along Division between Oak Park and Grove Avenue. Traffic on Oak Park Avenue is being redirected to Harlem Avenue.

Street resurfacing update – Concrete work including curb and sidewalk replacement is wrapping up at the locations where street resurfacing is planned along Lombard Avenue, Pleasant Street and Maple Avenue. The installation of watermain on Pleasant beginning at Taylor Avenue is underway. Paving at the various locations is expected to start closer to the end of the April.

Sidewalk repairs - Sidewalk repairs in the north section of the Village continued this week with the removal and replacement of concrete on the south side of east-west streets. The contractor hopes to have all sidewalks open by the end of the week.

Miscellaneous construction updates – The annual watermain valve replacement project is complete after landscaping was restored and remaining pavement work was finished this week. Elsewhere, the contractor for the Nicor Gas project performed sewer televising on the 1100 block of S. Cuyler Ave. and 1000 block of S. East Avenue this week.