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Free Shuttle Extends Hours During Summer Months

To make it even easier for residents and visitors to frequent restaurants, shops and recreation centers throughout the Village during the summer, the free Oak Park shuttle will offer extended hours on Thursday and Friday evenings through the end of August, beginning June 10.

The two conversion vans, each equipped with a wheelchair lift, typically operate on an hour-long loop from 10 a.m. - 5:30 p.m., seven days a week, except major holidays. But during the extended hours, Shuttle 1 will end its route at 9 p.m. at Oak Park Avenue and North Boulevard (stop number 1 on the route), and Shuttle 2 will complete its final circuit there at 9:30 p.m.

“One of the primary goals in starting the Oak Park Shuttle service was to provide enhanced access to our key community assets,” said Deputy Village Manager Peter J. Dame, who oversees the operation of the shuttle, which now is about midway into a one-year trial period.

“By offering later hours during the summer months we hope to encourage people to use the shuttle as a cost-effective, convenient way to sample the many entertainment, dining, shopping and recreation options available in the various business districts and park facilities throughout in the community – without having to worry about traffic or parking.”

The shuttle route includes 20 stops at 30-minute intervals along an eight-mile course designed to offer access to a range of important sites, and easy connections to many popular mass transit routes. Among the stops are key Village shopping and dining destinations including downtown, in the Lake Street-Oak Park Avenue area and in the Oak Park-Eisenhower business district.

The shuttle also stops at two major Park District facilities with pools and evening public swimming during the extended shuttle hours. The shuttle stops in the parking lot of Ridgeland Common, 415 W. Lake St., and at the Oak Park Conservatory across the street Rehm Park and Pool, 515 Garfield St. (For information on Park District programs visit www.oakparkparks.com.)

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Shuttle extended hours

Several shuttle stops also offer easy transfer to a host of mass transit options at points throughout the Village, including PACE and CTA buses, and the CTA's green and blue lines. Among the shuttle stops is the downtown intermodal transportation station, which links Metra's commuter rail west line and CTA trains and buses at a central location near the Marion Street Mall.

To reduce travel time, riders can transfer between the two shuttles at the top and bottom of the hour at Oak Park Avenue and South Boulevard, the starting and ending point of the shuttle route. By transferring to the other shuttle, riders can loop around just the greater downtown area, or just the southern portion of the route in only half an hour.

Riders can board a shuttle at any of the stops, which are marked by signs including a route map, a list of attractions near each stop and the arrival time of each of the two vans. In addition to times and stops, the maps note nearby mass transit connection options. Potential riders also can call 615.1830 for the most up-to-date route information, to seek assistance, ask questions or make comments. A route map and schedule is available on the Village website, www.oak-park.us.

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