

Downtown CONSTRUCTION NEWS



April 2007

Busy summer construction season ahead

If it is April, then it is spring and that means construction. A range of projects — both private and public — are planned for around the community, but no one section of the Village will be more directly affected than downtown Oak Park.

Whiteco begins

Construction of the mixed-use Whiteco project at Harlem Avenue and Ontario Street is about to move into full swing. Modular construction techniques are expected to mean that the building's entire shell will be in place by October.

The project, which includes a 14-story main residential building, a 135-space north extension of the Holley Court Parking Garage, a six-story wing with *Trader Joe's* specialty market on the first floor, and five townhomes, will use pre-cast concrete panels for both the floors and walls, a technique that moves much faster than traditional poured-in-place concrete or steel frame construction.

This modular construction approach also means heavy traffic to and from the site, as precast concrete beams, trusses and sections of the floors and walls are transported on oversized trucks to the site then lifted into place with cranes.

Trucks will be staged at Maywood Park near First and North avenues, a site that avoids any low train overpasses along the route to Oak Park. Truck



Apartments, townhomes, parking and a Trader Joe's specialty market will soon rise on this site at Harlem Avenue and Ontario Street.

traffic will be limited to 9 a.m. – 3 p.m., Monday through Saturday.

Police from Oak Park and River Forest will provide traffic control, including at the intersections of Harlem and North, and Harlem and Ontario. Traffic delays are likely, however, as the large trucks make their turns into and out of the construction site.

Trucks will return to the staging area in Maywood by exiting the construction site on Harlem and traveling north to North Avenue and turning west. Motorists are urged to take care when using Harlem Avenue north of Lake Street, and North Avenue between Harlem and First Avenue.

Sidewalks along the west side of the project site (east side of Harlem) will be closed from the alley north of *Border's* to Ontario Street. Sidewalks along the

Other pending projects

Projects in various stages of planning and discussion throughout the Village include the following:

- **Chicago Avenue/Humphrey Avenue:** four-story, mixed-use building with ground floor commercial and 21 residential units above.
- **Home Avenue/South Boulevard:** 17 townhomes and four-story, mixed-use building with ground floor commercial and 15 residential units above.
- **Madison Street, between Grove and Carpenter avenues:** four-story, mixed-use building with ground floor commercial and 39 residential units above.
- **Madison Street/Harlem:** Demolition of the current Wendy's and construction of a new Prairie-influence restaurant.
- **Oak Park Avenue:** Village-owned property at 828 S. Oak Park is on the market for redevelopment.
- **North Avenue:** First phase of a three-year, three-phase collaboration with Chicago to improve the street with new sidewalks, curbs, parkways, trees, decorative lights, landscaped center median and resurfacing. The first phase would be from Harlem Avenue to Oak Park Avenue.
- **Roosevelt Road/Grove Avenue:** 12, three-story townhomes.

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Summer construction season

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south side of Ontario also will be closed from Harlem to the north entrance to the Holley Court Parking Garage.

Marion Street

Work is expected to get underway in late April on the opening of Marion Street between North Boulevard and Lake Street. The project has been approved and funded, but the final construction management contract is not expected to be finalized until early this month.

Most of the actual construction will be on what is now the mall. But work also is planned for the Lake Street intersection, where dedicated left and right turn lanes for Marion Street traffic at Lake will be created. Periodic traffic delays on Lake are expected.

The Marion Street project includes installing brick pavers similar to the original early 20th century street, blue-stone sidewalks and granite curbs. Extensive landscaping, including new trees and planters also are planned, along with new light fixtures that are modern recreations of the early ones. Project design details are posted at www.oak-park.us.

Two-way traffic will be allowed on Marion, but the narrow driving lanes and rough brick surface have been designed to work together to reduce vehicle speed and remind drivers that the space is primarily for pedestrians. Limited on-street parking will be accommodated, and a new lot is planned for the empty space just south of Cold Stone Creamery to provide about two-dozen new parking spaces.

Other pending projects

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• South Boulevard/Oak Park

Avenue: demolition of buildings for future mixed-use development. Maintains historic buildings on Oak Park Avenue.



A portion of Westgate Street is part of the overall plan, too, including installing the same pavers, sidewalks, curbs and lights as on Marion Street. Traffic on Westgate will be limited to one-way west bound to Marion.

Work likely will begin with water and sewer line repairs and replacements. Pedestrian access to the stores on both Marion and Westgate will be maintained throughout the project.

Regency Homes

The final phase of the Regency Homes development north of Chase Bank on Marion Street will add to the construction activity downtown. Work is nearing completion on the townhome and duplex portions of the project to the north toward Ontario Street, but the nine-story condominium tower has yet to get underway. Construction vehicles likely will continue to periodically affect traffic on Marion Street and a portion the sidewalk on the east side of the street will be closed along the construction site.

Who to call

Whiteco: Dennis Schambach, 386.3148

Marion Street: Loretta Daly, 358.5648

Regency Homes: Bob Clements, 358.5644

Capital Improvements: Jim Budrick, 358.5720

Other projects: Craig Failor, 358.5425

Parking: Alva Johnson, 358.5750

Construction before 7 a.m. or after 6 p.m.:
Police, 386.3800

Capital improvements projects planned

24 blocks of local streets repaved, including Division Street, Harlem Avenue to Austin Boulevard; Augusta Avenue, Oak Park Avenue to Ridgeland Avenue; Adams Street from Home to Maple; Elmwood Avenue, Augusta to Thomas; Fillmore Avenue, Taylor to Austin; Grove Avenue, Chicago to Division; Scoville Avenue, Lake to Erie; South Boulevard, Harvey to Taylor, Thomas Street, Harvey to Austin; Van Buren Street, East to Scoville; and Humphrey Avenue, Jackson to Harrison.

Eight blocks of water and sewer mains replaced, including Humphrey Avenue, Jackson to Harrison; Kenilworth Avenue, Harvard to Roosevelt; Taylor Avenue, Harvard to Roosevelt; and Wenonah Avenue, Garfield to Harvard.

18 alley segments rebuilt, including west of Taylor, Greenfield to Lemoyne; south of Lemoyne, Hayes to Taylor; west of Harvey, Greenfield to Lemoyne; west of Elmwood, Greenfield to Lemoyne; west of East Ave., Division to Berkshire; west of Kenilworth, Greenfield to Lemoyne; west of Austin, Thomas to Division; west of Elmwood, Thomas to Division; west of Euclid, Erie to Superior; west of Maple, Erie to Superior; west of Austin, Madison to Washington; north of Madison, Humphrey to Austin; south of Washington, Humphrey to north/south alley; west of Taylor, Madison to Washington; north of Madison, Lombard to Taylor; south of Washington, Lombard to Taylor; west of Austin, Fillmore to Roosevelt; north of Roosevelt, Humphrey to Austin, Taylor to Lyman and Clarence to East Ave.

Letters are sent to residents prior to work beginning. For more information call 358.5700 or e-mail publicworks@oak-park.us.