



For Immediate Release: 11.26.07

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Photo to document community vitality, spirit and diversity

Oak Parkers are invited to help document a moment in local history by gathering for a community photograph at noon, Sat., Dec. 1, on the new Marion Street, between North Boulevard and Lake Street.

Officials are counting on a large crowd to fill what Village President David Pope has called Oak Park's downtown living room. But the photograph is not about showcasing the new downtown space, he said, but capturing the vitality, spirit and diversity of the community.

"I believe it is important at various times in the life of our community to document who we are and how far we have come," Pope said. "With this photograph, we hope to capture a single moment in our lifetimes that will provide future generations with insights into the people who called Oak Park home on Dec. 1, 2007. And what better time than the holiday season? And what better place than the new Marion Street?"

In addition to being a powerful tool to illustrate the Village as a great place to live, work and do business, Pope said he expects the photograph will become part of the archives of the area maintained by the Historical Society of Oak Park and River Forest.

The photograph will be taken from near North Boulevard, looking north along Marion toward Lake Street, during *WinterFest*, a day designated by local merchants to launch the holiday shopping season. The photographer will be above the crowd on the train platform, the camera lens directed north across the crowd.

The community photograph is just one highlight of the wide range of activities planned for *WinterFest*, scheduled for 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. Store windows have been decorated with international themes and visitors will be invited to come inside and learn about the holiday traditions of other lands.

Santa will be there, too, as will the holiday lights, ice sculptures and roaming entertainers playing music, telling stories and performing in various stores. Free holiday ornaments made of biodegradable materials that include seeds that can be planted in the spring also will be available, as will refreshments provided by local merchants.

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**Community photo
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Marion Street was reopened last week after a complete reconstruction, including brick pavers similar to the original early 20th century street, bluestone sidewalks, granite curbs and lighting fixtures chosen to complement the historic character of the downtown area. The street was the last remnant of a 1974 pedestrian-only mall.

For more information on the community photograph, call 358.5770 or e-mail village@oak-park.us. *WinterFest* information and links to the Downtown Business Association are posted at www.greatneighborhoodsoakpark.com.

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