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### **New gateways welcome visitors to Oak Park Arts District**

The Oak Park Arts District along Harrison Street has always been a little different from the Village's other business districts. Now, with new gateways at its key entry points, the Oak Park Arts District really shines.

Lighted gateways were installed this week at key points along and near Harrison Street between Austin Boulevard and Ridgeland Avenue, their locations chosen to let travelers know they are entering a burgeoning arts district.

The new gateways are located on each side of Harrison Street at Austin Boulevard and Ridgeland Avenue, as well as on Lombard Avenue, the one to the south welcoming visitors from the CTA Blue Line.

"Everyone is excited about the growing number of arts, entertainment and dining venues in the Oak Park Arts District," said Village Manager Tom Barwin. "The gateways are visible indications of the Village's commitment to the arts and nurturing the economic vitality of an important business district.

"I am confident that much more is in store for the district. The investment community already has begun to sit up and take notice of this unique part of Oak Park and the region. The Arts District is beginning to hit its stride and the vision its pioneers have long held."

The idea for the gateways came from an urban design plan created with input from area businesses and residents who saw a need to define the district's geographic limits and character. Several concepts were presented at community workshops, including full archways over the street, water features and illuminated columns.

The clear preference was for the current freestanding gateway design, the subtle curve of the metal structures implying an arch over the adjacent sidewalks. And come spring, plants will bring a green element to the design.

For more information on the *Arts District Urban Design Plan* for the Harrison Street corridor, visit [www.oak-park.us](http://www.oak-park.us) – just mouse over the Departments tab, click on Planning and look for the link.

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