

2002 Crime Drops to Third Lowest Level in 21 Years

The total number of crimes committed in the Village fell to 2,554 in 2002, as compared to 2,640 crimes in 2001, a 3.3 percent decline and the third lowest rate in the past 21 years. Burglaries and thefts, which police consider primarily crimes of opportunity, represented more than 80 percent of all 2002 criminal activity. Thieves mostly targeted garages — often unlocked or open — and took personal items left unattended or on car seats.

Arrests for the same period were up nearly nine percent, a trend the Police Department attributes to increased citizen involvement and a growing willingness to report suspicious activity. Oak Park police consider citizen involvement the cornerstone of a successful program to prevent and reduce crime, noting that an alert citizen is often all it takes to stop a crime and quickly catch a criminal. That's why citizens should never hesitate to call 9-1-1 when they encounter suspicious people or incidents, police say.

Increased vigilance by citizens and police patrols also helped in a long-running battle with intravenous drug users who may see Oak Park as a convenient "shooting" stop along the route from known drug selling areas in Chicago. Arrests for possession of hypodermic syringes and possession of drug paraphernalia declined significantly in 2002 as users have begun to avoid Oak Park, police say.

Here's a brief overview of the statistics:

Village increases emergency preparedness public information efforts



Anticipating concern in the community about how international affairs may impact life in Oak Park, the Village has stepped up its public information efforts to reassure residents of the readiness of Village municipal resources to respond to an emergency. A dedicated telephone number, 358.5600, provides a recorded message on the current national alert status and the telephone

numbers of other departments to call with specific questions or concerns. The message also contains the Homeland Security Department's toll-free number (1.800.BE.READY) and website address (www.ready.gov). In the event of a real emergency, the telephone line would be manned. Visitors to the Village's website (www.oak-park.us) will be able to click on a highly visible button on the main landing page and link directly to an overview of the Village's state of preparedness and access links to other state and federal sites, including the Department of Homeland Security, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Illinois Emergency Management Agency, the Illinois Department of Public Health and the American Red Cross. Village customer service representatives and emergency dispatchers also have been provided with the list of telephone numbers and websites to which callers can be referred. For more information, call 358.5770 or email village@oak-park.us.

- Burglaries dropped to 541 in 2002, as compared to 580 in 2001. Burglary arrests reflected the decrease, as 62 individuals were arrested in 2002 compared to 87 in 2001. The vast majority of burglaries in Oak Park are to garages and autos.
- Thefts also were down in 2002, totaling 1,575 compared to the previous year's 1,694 incidents. Arrests for theft declined to 316 in 2002, down from 350 in 2001. Most thefts in Oak Park are petty, including bicycles, retail shoplifting and items taken from open or unlocked garages and vehicles.
- No murders were committed in Oak Park in 2002, and arsons declined to seven as compared to the previous year's eight cases. No arson arrests were made in 2002, as compared to seven in 2001.
- Motor vehicle thefts were up in 2002, reaching 218 as compared to 183 in 2001. Arrests for motor vehicle theft also were up, totaling 21 in 2002, compared to seven in 2001.
- Five criminal sexual assaults were reported in 2002, up from two in

DEVELOPMENT NEWS

Call 358.5640 or email devsvcs@oak-park.us



Euclid Commons

New rental, retail coming

The final component of the Euclid Terraces project will bring a combination of rental apartments and retail merchants to the southwest corner of Euclid Avenue and Lake Street. A key feature of the design includes a landscaped, brick walkway providing pedestrian access between the Avenue Garage and Lake Street. The development will replace the current Tasty Dog restaurant, which will soon be moving to a new facility across the street.

Residents invited to comment on Roosevelt Road concepts

Public input is being sought on draft recommendations for ways to improve the economic vitality of the 1.5 mile Roosevelt Road corridor between Austin Boulevard and Harlem Avenue. Funded by a state grant the Village helped Berwyn to acquire, the study identifies the corridor's assets and offers a range of ideas on how best to invigorate the area. Recommendations include nurturing pedestrian travel with wider sidewalks, landscaping and improved lighting, improving traffic flow and control with medians, and attracting specialized boutiques and residential development to the area. Residents can review the plan at www.oak-park.us – click on news, then the icon in the right column. Copies also can be reviewed in the Office of the Village Clerk in Village Hall or purchased for \$5. Comments should be directed to the Development Services Department, Village Hall, 123 Madison St., Oak Park, IL 60302 or via email to devsvcs@oak-park.us.

Proposals Sought for Development of Village-Owned Property on Lake Street

Experienced developers have been asked to present ideas for the nearly 35,000 square feet of publicly owned property that fronts along the 1100 block of Lake Street in the heart of Oak Park's downtown business district. The formal

Request for Proposals (RFP), issued in March, seeks concepts for the former Maple Furrier store and adjacent metered parking lot as well as the Drechsler Building, a structure with historic significance that development proposals will be required to preserve. RFP responses are due at Village Hall by 5 p.m., May 2. In addition to incorporating the Drechsler Building into the project design, proposals also must create a pedestrian and vehicle right-of-way between Lake Street and the Holley Court Garage. Access to the garage and an open, inviting walkway are key components of the Village's long-term plan to keep the downtown pedestrian-oriented and linked to the multi-modal mass transit hub on North Boulevard. In addition, concepts must be consistent with the existing streetscape and expand the types of goods and services now available downtown. Proposers also must demonstrate the financial ability to transform their concepts into reality. Developers are fairly free to propose what they think will best work, including incorporating residential and/or office space at upper levels. Since the parcels are in a transit overlay zoning district, any development proposal must have retail along much of the street-level frontage. To review a copy of the RFP, contact the Development Services Department.

New Parking Garage Approved



The view west along Lake Street from Scoville Avenue will change in late September when construction of a new parking facility is scheduled to be completed. Approved by the elected boards of the Village and Oak Park River Forest High School District 200, the new 300-car parking structure anchors a comprehensive parking management plan for the entire neighborhood from South Boulevard to Chicago Avenue and Ridgeland Avenue to Oak Park Avenue. The facility, which will be only 15 feet high and extensively landscaped, will be restricted to high school teachers and staff from 6 a.m. to 4 p.m. on regular attendance days, but open to the public all other times, including for special events at the high school and Ridgeland Common, and Farmer's Market patrons.

2002 Crime Drops

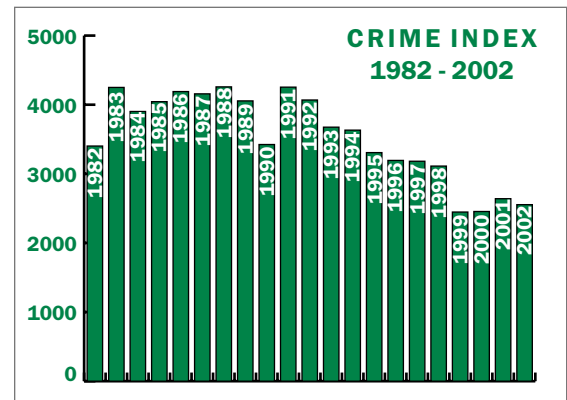
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2001. However, typically in these types of cases the victim knows the assailant. Arrests in this category were up as well, from two in 2001 to four in 2002.

- Robberies increased to 180 in 2002 from the previous year's 156, an increase that police attribute to the downturn in the economy. Arrests for robberies were up significantly, totaling 133 in 2002 as compared to 55 in 2001.
- Incidents of aggravated assault/battery reached 28 in 2002, up from 16 in 2001. Police say these types of incidents tend to increase when economic conditions create frustrations for some individuals. Twenty-nine individuals were arrested in this category during 2002, compared to 12 in the prior year.

- Drug-related arrests declined overall to 108 in 2002, as compared to the previous year's 194 arrests. Arrests for possession of cannabis grew to 44 from the previous year's 42 and arrests for possession of controlled substances grew to 19 from 15. Arrests for possession of hypodermic syringes dropped to 20 in 2002 from 54 in 2001, and arrests for possession of drug paraphernalia declined to 23 from the previous year's 83.

Police say much of the crime in Oak Park could be eliminated if residents will just take a few simple steps like closing and locking their garages, removing personal property from plain view in their autos and not leaving personal items unattended. As for increases in some violent crimes, police point out that the actual numbers remain



very low in the community, especially given Oak Park's proximity to a major metropolitan area.

Although Oak Park is a very safe community, police say residents still need to be vigilant and take precautions. Common sense is a valuable crime-fighting tool and people need to trust their instincts, and be aware of their surroundings, whether on foot or in an auto, to stop a crime before it happens.

PUBLIC WORKS NEWS

Call 358.5700 or email publicwoks@oak-park.us

Yardwaste Pick Up

Collection of bundled brush and yardwaste will begin the week of April 7. Bundled brush no larger than two feet in diameter and four feet in length and yardwaste such as grass clippings, leaves, shrubs and vines will be picked up on regular collection days. A green sticker must be attached to each brush bundle, 32-gallon paper bag and rigid container filled with yardwaste. Stickers are available for \$1.80 each from Oak Park grocery and hardware stores and the Cashier's Office at Village Hall, 123 Madison St. Any yardwaste mixed with trash will not be collected. Residents are urged to look for alternatives to bagging yardwaste such as mulching mowers, leaf shredders or backyard compost piles.

Tree Planting

Each spring the Forestry Division works to reforest Village parkways where damaged and diseased trees have been removed. In order to diversify the tree population a wide variety of species are planted, including Autumn Blaze Maple, Catalpa, Kentucky Coffee Tree, Ivory Silk Lilac, Hackberry, Bur Oak, Swamp White Oak, Sugar Maple, White Ash and two DED-resistant Elms, Homestead and Frontier. While every effort is made to replace all trees removed, it is not always possible. Full size shade trees require a minimum of 35 feet between trees. Factors such as underground utilities, parkway widths and shade tolerance also determine planting sites. Residents wishing to have a tree larger than the standard 2.5-inch diameter tree can pay the difference between the standard and upgrade costs.

Alley Clean-Up Program

Organize your neighbors and participate in the Alley Clean-Up Program developed by the Keep Oak Park Beautiful Committee. The program provides supply kits containing plastic trash bags, pink refuse stickers and rubber gloves, as well as information on organizing a successful and safe event.

Leaf Blower Ban

Gasoline-powered leaf blowers are prohibited in Oak Park from June 1 – Oct. 15.

ComEd funds resident notification system

ComEd has agreed to provide \$40,000 in funding for a high-speed notification system initially to serve persons in the Barrie Park area, but to be later expanded to benefit the entire community. Sometimes described as “reverse 911,” the notification system will allow simultaneous notification of residents through standard telephone lines, cell phones, email and faxes. Calls can be directed to special teams and crews, specific groups of residents or a specific geographic area of the Village. The system could be used to notify residents of mosquito abatement efforts, missing persons or emergency situations. A detailed description of the system is available at www.dccusa.com. For more information, call the Department of Public Health at 358.5480 or email health@oak-park.us.

Who to Call at Village Hall

Main number	383.6400
Village TTY	383.0048
Info Line	445.3340
Building and Property Standards	358.5430
Community Services	358.5400
Community Relations	358.5423
Housing	358.5424
Planning/Community Development	358.5425
Information Technology	358.5450
Finance	358.5460
Utility Billing Inquiries	358.5478
Fire Non-Emergency	445.3300
Public Health	358.5480
Animal Control	358.5680
Development Services	358.5640
Human Resources	358.5650
Law	358.5660
Village Clerk	358.5670
Police Non-Emergency	386.3800
Crime Tip Hotline	386.0740
Police/Fire TTY	848.1911
West Suburban Consolidated Dispatch Center	771.9110
Public Works	358.5700
Snow Hotline	358.SNOW
Parking Office	358.PARK
Night Parking Passes	358.NITE
Day Parking Passes	358.DAYS
Village Manager's Office	358.5770
Village Board	358.5784
Village Web Page	www.oak-park.us

**POLICE/FIRE/MEDICAL
EMERGENCIES**

911

HEALTH DEPARTMENT NEWS

Call 358.5480 or email health@oak-park.us

West Nile Virus forum

The Oak Park Board of Health, in conjunction with the citizen Energy and Environmental Advisory Committee, will host a community forum on the West Nile Virus at 7:30 p.m., Wed., April 23, in Council Chambers at Village Hall, 123 Madison St. Speakers will offer tips on reducing the mosquito population and avoiding infection. For more information, call 358.5490.



Medical Reserve Corps volunteers sought

Volunteers are needed to assist the Health Department form a local Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) to prepare for the possibility of a public health emergency. Responsibilities of volunteers will include logistical planning, records keeping and assisting in public health awareness campaigns. The Oak Park Health Department was one of only 42 community-based organizations awarded a grant to begin building a local MRC unit. To learn more call 358.5490.

Immunization clinic

Immunization services are available from 3 – 6 p.m. the second Wednesday of every month at the Health Department Clinic, 320 Lake St. The next immunizations clinic will be April 9. A parent or guardian must accompany children under 18. No appointment is necessary. For more information call 358.5491.

Animal licenses due

May 1 is the deadline for all dogs and outdoor cats to display their 2003 animal licenses. The license fee is \$7 for a neutered/spayed animal and \$10 for any non-spayed/non-neutered animal. Proof of a current rabies inoculation and spaying/neutering is required for licensing. For more information call 358.5679 or visit Animal Control in Village Hall, 123 Madison St.

Public Health Week

Individuals and organizations that have made exceptional contributions to the community's health will be honored during National Public Health Week, April 7 – 13. Among the activities will be a Village Hall display of artwork promoting the theme “Getting in Shape for the Future” and a “Quick & Healthy Recipe” promotion to gather and share recipes that are colorful, lower in fat or higher in fiber. For details, call 358.5487.

Keep rodents in check

Help keep rodents in check by reporting sightings, exposed garbage, unapproved refuse storage or structural defects in buildings that might be conducive to rats. Working with citizen volunteers in the Rodent Control Coalition, the Health Department assesses sightings and conditions, develops educational campaigns and utilizes integrated pest management techniques to keep rodents in check. For more information call 358.5480.

Smoking cessation support group

A support group for smokers who have recently quit is held from 7 – 8 p.m. the second Wednesday of each month at Village Hall, 123 Madison St. The group shares tips on sticking to the resolve to quit and new ideas on coping with the urge to smoke. Call 358.5484.

NEWS YOU CAN USE

Parking Office extends hours...

The Parking Office will be open from 8:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. on Monday, April 28 for permit renewals. For more information call 358.5756 or email publicworks@oak-park.us.

Great Paint Exchange...Residents can safely dispose of unwanted, but still useable paint at the Great Paint Exchange. Bring half-to-full cans of paint from 9 a.m. – 11 a.m., Sat., April 26, to the Public Works Center, 131 South Blvd. Anyone in need of paint may pick it up during the paint Give-Away from 1 p.m. – 3 p.m. the same day. For more information call 358.5700 or email publicworks@oak-park.us.

Volunteers to be honored...Oak Park residents who have served on one of the many Village boards and commissions during 2002 will be honored at a Volunteer Appreciation event from 7 – 9 p.m., Wed., April 30, at Cheney Mansion, 220 N. Euclid Ave. For more information call 358.5670 or email clerk@oak-park.us

Easter egg hunt...The annual Easter Egg Hunt for children ages three to 10 will be held from 9:30 a.m. to noon, Sat., April 19, at Ridgeland Common on Lake Street. Admission is free, but each child will need a ticket, which is available at both Ridgeland Common and the Park District Administration Office, 218 Madison St. For more information, call 383.0002.

Farmers' Market...The Oak Park Farmers' Market will begin its 29th season on June 7. The Market is open every Saturday from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m., June through October, in the Pilgrim Church parking lot, 460 Lake St. Volunteers are needed to serve on the Farmers' Market Commission and as Friends of the Farmers' Market. For more information call 358.5780.

Visitors Bureau calendar...To keep up to date about community events check out the calendar at www.visitoakpark.com. A free visitor guide also is available at 158 N. Forest Ave. For more information call 1.800.OAK.PARK or email info@visitoakpark.com.

National Poetry Month...The Oak Park Area Arts Council and Oak Park Public Art Advisory Commission will celebrate April as National Poetry Month with a sidewalk festival. Stencils have been made of each of the 15 poems chosen from submissions from River Oak Arts and School Districts 97 and 200. Each poem will be transferred to the sidewalk in several different locations to be read and enjoyed by residents as they walk Village streets daily during April. To learn more call 358.5692.

Cable service provider name change...Oak Park's cable television and modem service provider is now Comcast following a corporate merger with AT&T Broadband. Residents experiencing problems should first contact Comcast at 866.594.1234. The Village has a dispute resolution procedure in place to help if unresolved issues remain. The Village also records and tracks all problems and complaints for cable franchise performance review. The Telecommunications Commission, a citizen advisory body to the Village Board, reviews all complaints monthly. For assistance or to register a complaint, contact the Village Manager's Office at 358.5778 or email village@oak-park.us.

Village tree care recognized



TREE CITY USA

The Village has been named a Tree City U.S.A. for the 19th consecutive year. The National Arbor Day Foundation presented the awards in recognition of the Village's on-going dedication and professionalism in preserving the urban forest. One of only 174 Illinois communities to receive the award for 2002 programs, the Village was recognized for its planning and management tools, including the proper maintenance and care of some 20,000 parkway trees, and a new program to remove diseased Dutch Elm trees from private property. Under the direction of the Forestry Division, last year crews planted 350 new trees, pruned more than 8,000 parkway trees and responded to more 1,000 pruning requests from residents. The Village also just completed the first full year of a trimming cycle that will have every tree on public property pruned once every four years. Long recognized by the National Arbor Day Foundation as having one of the country's best managed and executed professional urban forestry programs, the Village also has been a multiple recipient of the Foundation's prestigious Growth Award. For more information, call 358.5700 or email publicworks@oak-park.us.

APRIL VOP-TV6 PROGRAMMING HIGHLIGHTS

Daily at 6 a.m., 8 a.m., 10 a.m., 6 p.m., 10 p.m.

Multi-Family Building Improvement Grants
Capital Improvement Program
2003 Budget Message
Preventing Garage Burglaries
Preserving Oak Park's Urban Forest

Monday – Friday 4 – 5 p.m.
NASA Programming

**Live at 7:30 p.m. Mondays, rebroadcast
Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m.**
Regular Board Meetings & Study Sessions



Village of Oak Park

Village Hall

123 Madison Street

Oak Park, Illinois 60302-4272



Village President Joanne E. Trapani

Trustees

Barbara Ebner Diana Carpenter

Gus Kostopoulos William Turner

Galen Gockel Carolyn Hodge-West

Village Clerk Sandra Sokol

Village Manager Carl Swenson

Residential Customer Local
Oak Park, Illinois

Postal Carrier
Pre-Sort

PAID
U.S. Postage
Standard
Presort
Permit No. 26
Oak Park, IL

I KE UPDATE

Call 358.5770 or email village@oak-park.us



RTA Approves Oak Park Transit Alternatives Initiative

The Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) has approved a study recommended by Oak Park as part of the Village's call to examine alternatives to expanding

the Eisenhower Expressway. RTA officials are preparing a draft project management plan for the two-and-a-half year study, which is expected to begin in May. Main elements of the plan will include a market analysis, public involvement, alternatives and local land use policies to guide any major new transit service in the corridor. The study of Ike alternatives sought by the Village is intended by the RTA to meet the analysis required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for a Major Investment Study, which the Village believes is required by federal law before any significant transportation project is undertaken. Among the transportation alternatives recommended by the Village are extending the CTA's Blue Line further west and expanding capacity of Metra's Union Pacific West Line. For more information on the Village's position on the Eisenhower Expressway, call 358.5770 or visit www.oak-park.us — click on news, then the I-290 icon along the right side of the page.

Public input sought on regional transportation plan

The Chicago Area Transportation Study (CATS) is expected to release the first draft of its triennial update to the long-range regional transportation plan (RTP) for the Chicago area on April 7. The yearlong process to update the RTP, known as Shared Path 2030, will conclude in October. The RTP recommendations are expected to include Village-sup-

ported proposals to extend the CTA Blue Line from Forest Park to Lisle, double the commuter train capacity on the Metra Union Pacific West line and add a rapid transit bus line on Cermak Road from Cicero to Lombard. The draft plan also is expected to retain the Illinois Department of Transportation's proposed high-occupancy vehicle lanes on I-290. Residents are urged to participate in the public comment mechanisms to influence the development of the strategies and projects contained in the final plan. A 30-minute video describing the draft recommended RTP will air on WJYS (broadcast channel 62 and cable channel 17) at 6:30 p.m., April 10; 4 p.m., April 11 and 13; 8:30 p.m., April 14; 10:30 p.m., April 15; and 6:30 p.m., April 16. A Shared Path 2030 Hotline will then be open to take recorded comments at 312.293.3466. CATS will also hold an open house in each of the six counties of the region to obtain public input. Meeting sites closest to Oak Park include 4 – 8 p.m., Thurs., April 24 at the Wheaton Park District Community Center Memorial Room, 1777 S. Blanchard St., and 10:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m., Sat., April 26, DePaul University Cortelyou Commons, 2324 N. Fremont St., Chicago. Comments can also be emailed to CATS at SP2030@catsmpo.com, faxed at 312.793.3481 or mailed to Shared Path 2030 Comments, Chicago Area Transportation Study (CATS), 300 W. Adams St., 2nd Floor, Chicago, IL 60606. For more information about the draft plan and Shared Path 2030 process visit www.catsmpo.com. For more information on the Village's position on the Eisenhower Expressway, visit www.oak-park.us — click on news, then the I-290 icon along the right side of the page.