

*Schedule to Limit Impact on Business Districts***Resurfacing of Oak Park Avenue from North to Roosevelt Underway**

**A** long-planned project to resurface the entire length of Oak Park Avenue from North Avenue to Roosevelt Road is now underway. In addition to resurfacing the important north-south artery, the project also includes rebuilding sewer catch basins, replacing curbs where needed and modernizing 12 traffic signals along the avenue's three-mile route.

The project has been a part of the Village's long-term capital improvement plan since 1999. While a construction project of this size in this area is expected to create some short-term inconveniences, keeping this important Village roadway in good condition is essential to community.

A key component of the planning for the project has been working with the businesses along the route to stage the work to limit its impact on their customers. Work began at North Avenue and will move south to Lake Street, then shift to Roosevelt Road and move north to Madison Street, completing

this first phase by the end of the construction season in early November. Crews will then return in the spring to finish the final segment of the roadway.

Following a two-season schedule of fall and spring should mean the Lake Street-Oak Park Avenue and Oak Park-Eisenhower business districts are not impacted by construction during the busy holiday shopping season.

Work is not expected to disrupt east-west traffic on Lake Street, which was reconstructed in 2001. However,

overnight parking in some areas will be affected. Arrangements will be made to provide alternate parking for permit holders as the work progresses into specific zones.

The Village's project oversight includes having a resident engineer on duty in a field office near the construction. Residents who have questions or concerns will be able to call the on-site engineer for specific information on the work near them. The telephone number of the resident engineer will be on construction signs along the work route.

The \$3.8 million dollar project is funded primarily by federal dollars administered through the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT). The Village must compete with 19 other communities in this region alone for federal dollars to improve major streets. The contractor is Plote Construction Co. of Elgin, which was selected through a competitive bid process.

For more information, call 358.5720 or email [publicwork@oak-park.us](mailto:publicwork@oak-park.us).

**Voter registration deadline nears**

**T**ues., Oct. 5 is the final day to register to be eligible to vote in the November 2 General Election, including transferring registration information to a new address. Two types of identification are required, at least one with a current address. A driver's license or picture I.D. is preferred, along with additional identification such as a utility bill. Residents can register at the Office of the Village Clerk in Village Hall, 123 Madison St., or at the Oak Park Township Office, 105 S. Oak Park Ave. For more information call 358.5670, email [clerk@oak-park.us](mailto:clerk@oak-park.us) or visit [www.voterinfonet.com](http://www.voterinfonet.com), a website operated by the Cook County Clerk.

# Collaboration, communications serves community well

Successful, innovative communities have positive working relationships among their local governments and taxing districts that place the welfare of citizens above individual jurisdictions and missions.

Unlike many communities where government officials don't coordinate productively across taxing body boundaries or municipal borders, the Village has, time and time again, collaborated with other governmental entities and institutions to find creative solutions to complex problems – solutions that benefit taxpayers.

## Crossing jurisdictional boundaries



Examples of intergovernmental cooperation in Oak Park abound.

Among the ways the outstanding working relationships and communications among Oak Park's governmental bodies have served the best interests of the citizens are the following:

- Downtown Tax Increment Finance District (TIF) agreement between the Village and school districts to carve out completed developments to provide immediate funding, while preserving an effective economic development tool.
- Joint management of the Parks and Recreation Master Planning process that will help determine the community's recreational priorities far into the future.
- Shared challenge to Oak Park Hospital's property tax appeal that held the organization to commitments it made to gain support for an expansion project.



- Creation of the High School District 200 community parking plan that took cars off neighborhood streets and added a much-needed parking resource to the area that is shared by teachers and staff, attendees at special events, Ridgeland Common users and Farmers Market patrons.
- Commitment to provide direct financial support to Elementary School District 97 to help this vital community asset maintain important programs.

## Crossing geographic boundaries

Cooperation and collaboration crosses the Village's geographic boundaries as well. Oak Park and River Forest operate a state-of-the-art joint emergency dispatch center. Elmwood Park will soon join the West Suburban Consolidated Dispatch Center in this cooperative endeavor that provides superior service to the citizens of each community at a reduced cost through shared expenses.

Oak Park and River Forest also share a major fire fighting apparatus that has given both communities a cost-effective way to improve public safety functions.

In addition, the Village recently completed a joint effort with the City of Berwyn to complete a comprehensive study of how to improve the look and economic vitality of Roosevelt Road.

## Crossing interdepartmental boundaries

This collaborative spirit also is evident within the Village's own government organization, helping to improve service delivery to the community.

The Community Relations Department is increasingly called upon when conflict or quality of life situations arise. Department staff works closely with the Police, Public Health and Building & Property Standards departments, as well as with Youth Intervention and the Older Adult Coalition to coordinate a comprehensive response and provide mediation to help resolve neighborhood concerns. Staff also now routinely handle court-ordered mediations, case management oversight, tenant landlord disputes, and counseling and referral, as well as attend neighborhood outreach meetings and manage special events such as A Day in our Village and the annual Independence Day Parade.

At a more personal level, Village management staff periodically holds drop-in community meetings at all eight neighborhood elementary schools. Citizens who attend have an opportunity to discuss services in their neighborhoods with senior executives, who also benefit with insights from residents' observations.

Clearly, in Oak Park today, citizens benefit from unprecedented cooperative working relationships, collaborations and communications among the range of governments and institutions in the Village, in neighboring communities and departments within the municipal government organization itself.

For more information on Village efforts to build and foster these relationships, call 358.5770 or email [village@oak-park.us](mailto:village@oak-park.us).

**Next month** – *Municipal Administration* (watch for the video versions on VOP-TV6)

## Downtown planning continues

The second in a series of workshops to gather community input to help create a vision for the redevelopment of the greater downtown area is scheduled for Wed., Sept. 22. Visit [www.oak-park.us](http://www.oak-park.us), call 358.5418 or email [GDTMasterPlan@oak-park.us](mailto:GDTMasterPlan@oak-park.us) for time and location. Future workshops are scheduled for November 10 and in January. The workshops are led by Crandall Arambula, a planning firm with a national reputation for urban and community design projects that have helped revitalize aging business districts. Among the range of factors being discussed in Oak Park are quality of life, economic viability, building height, building design, density, parking, traffic, housing types, public improvements, environmental impacts and land use. The study area is primarily within the boundaries of the Downtown Increment Tax Financing District, or TIF. The downtown TIF includes much of Lake Street from Harlem Avenue to East Avenue, and adjacent areas north to Ontario Street and just south of Pleasant Street.

### September VOP-TV6 Programming Highlights

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

- Job Skills Program
- Oak Park Avenue Construction
- Oak Park Today — Investing for the Future (*second in a series*)
- Oak Park Honors NASA Candidate
- Commitment to Community
- A Plan for Our Parks

#### NASA Programming

Tuesday – Friday 3 – 5 p.m.

#### Regular Board Meetings

Live at 7:30 p.m. first and third Mondays, rebroadcast Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m, Thursdays and Saturdays at 11 a.m.

**First time homebuyer's seminar...**A free seminar to help prospective first-time homebuyers understand loan programs available in Oak Park is scheduled for 7 – 8:30 p.m., Thurs. Sept. 16 at Village Hall, 123 Madison St. Financial assistance programs will be explained and participants will receive a free packet of helpful information. Pre-registration is required. For more information, call 358.5408 or email [comsvcs@oak-park.us](mailto:comsvcs@oak-park.us).

**Hours extended...**The Office of the Village Clerk is open from 8:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. on Mondays. Services available during late hours include vehicle sticker purchases, voter registration and information on other Village services. Regular hours are 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information call 358.5670 or email [clerk@oak-park.us](mailto:clerk@oak-park.us).

**Cable television or modem service problem...**If you are unable to resolve a problem directly with the cable company at 866.594.1234 (toll-free) contact the Village where a dispute resolution procedure is in place to help. The Village also records and tracks all problems or complaints for cable franchise performance review. For assistance or to register a complaint, contact the Village Manager's Office at 358.5778 or email [village@oak-park.us](mailto:village@oak-park.us).

**Walkers' challenge...**The second 10,000-steps-a-day walkers' challenge will begin with an information session from 9:30 – 11:30 a.m., Sat., Sept. 18, at the main branch of the Oak Park Public Library, 834 Lake St. The first 34 people to attend will receive a free pedometer to help them track their progress. The 26 participants in the first walkers' challenge took some 8,769,022 steps in two months. In addition to the challenge, organized neighborhood walking groups welcome new members. Groups gather at 8:45

a.m. Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, and 6 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays in front of the library's main branch. The Health Department also is interested in residents' favorite walking routes. For more information on the challenge, walking groups or to share a route call 358.5484 or email [health@oak-park.us](mailto:health@oak-park.us).

**Health screenings...**Health screenings to help 30 to 50 year olds start reducing personal risk for major killers heart disease, stroke and diabetes are available from 9:40 a.m. to noon the second Saturday of each month in the main branch of the Oak Park Public Library, 834 Lake St. The *Know Your Numbers* program screenings are for blood pressure, total cholesterol, non-fasting blood glucose, high-density lipids (HDL), body mass index, height and weight. Requiring only about 20 minutes from testing to results, the procedure involves just a finger stick to obtain a blood sample. Participants also receive a brief counseling session with a registered nurse who explains the test results. Screening fees are \$10 for all tests, but persons unable to pay may receive free screenings. Appointments are required. Please call 358.5486 or email [health@oak-park.us](mailto:health@oak-park.us).

**Affordable health insurance available...**Adults and children who meet financial eligibility guidelines are now being enrolled in low-cost/no-cost health care plans. *KidCare* covers doctor visits, hospital and clinic care, X-rays, lab tests and prescriptions for children and pregnant women, and helps pay premiums of employer-sponsored or private insurance plans. *Access to Care* also covers doctor visits, lab tests, x-rays and prescriptions, but participants are responsible for a nominal co-pay for each service. To learn more call 358.5484 or email [health@oak-park.us](mailto:health@oak-park.us).

## Ike Update

# Final Cap the Ike plan nearer

Community consensus on a preferred concept for covering the Eisenhower Expressway through Oak Park moved closer to reality last month with the unveiling of three concepts distilled from an ongoing, extensive public planning process. These latest, more detailed designs were based upon public comments about six preliminary concepts presented in July, as well as input gathered through other visioning and community input processes. The three plans now under review have several features in common, including rebuilding all existing transit stations to provide easier access to the CTA Blue Line, an east-west path from Harlem Avenue to Austin Boulevard to link to the Prairie Path and to Columbus Park and new or expanded parks and open space over the expressway. Each concept also would reconstruct Garfield Street to be a standard width, two-way street over the railroad tracks, create several new north-south crossings over the expressway for pedestrians, bicycles and vehicular traffic and extend Harrison to connect with Garfield to bring both sides of the Oak Park Avenue/Eisenhower Business districts closer together with a new, safer intersection over the highway. All of the new features in each plan would be located on new land created by the cap, so no existing commercial buildings or residences would be displaced. One concept, entitled *Invisible Ike*, would cover the entire length of the expressway through Oak Park with 30 acres of new active and passive recreation space including a multipurpose sports field house and other civic amenities such as a conference center and arts center, as well as 4.3 acres of mixed use or residential property. The other two concepts — *Green Space* and *Thousand Trees* — would cover less of the expressway,



View the concepts at Village Hall,  
123 Madison St.

Top: *Thousand Trees*

Center: *Invisible Ike*

Bottom: *Green Space*

but still include innovative use of green plants and trees to reduce the effects of the highway where it remained open. The *Green Space* option uses a trellis-like space frame to hold plantings over the expressway and features an urban nature center and civic park. The *Thousand Trees* option uses a tree-lined berm along a six-to-10-foot high noise wall to reduce expressway effects where the highway is not completely covered, and features an amphitheater, arts center and community center. Public comment on the designs and preferences for the features found in each will be taken until Sept. 10 and then used to develop a single plan for further public discussion sometime in October. The concepts are on display in the public area at Village Hall and can be viewed on the project website [www.captheikestudy.com](http://www.captheikestudy.com). For more information, call 358.5778 or email [village@oak-park.us](mailto:village@oak-park.us).

### Who to Call at Village Hall

Main number	383.6400
Village TTY	383.0048
Info Line	445.3340
Adjudication	358.5479
Building & Property Standards	358.5430
Licenses/Permits	358.5433
Zoning	358.5449
Codes/status of plans	358.5434
Property complaints	358.5443
Inspections	358.5440
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	<a href="http://www.oak-park.us">www.oak-park.us</a>

**POLICE/FIRE/MEDICAL  
EMERGENCIES**

**911**

## ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

### Annual Great Paint Exchange coming

Oak Parkers can safely dispose of unwanted, but usable paint, or take home free paint, at *The Great Paint Exchange* scheduled for Sat., Sept. 18, at the Public Works Center, 131 South Blvd. Half-to-full cans of latex paint will be accepted from 9 – 11 a.m., and then given away from 1 – 3 p.m. For more information, call 358.5700 or email [publicworks@oak-park.us](mailto:publicworks@oak-park.us).

### Household hazardous materials collection set

Area residents can get rid of household hazardous materials from 8 a.m. – 3 p.m., Sat., Oct. 16 in the north parking lot of Brookfield Zoo, located along First Avenue between Ogden Avenue and 31st Street. Acceptable materials include oil-based paint, paint thinner, herbicides, insecticides, pesticides, gasoline, pool chemicals, mercury, batteries (household and auto), motor oil, drain cleaners, solvents, cleaning products, antifreeze, hobby chemicals, fluorescent bulbs and thermostats. Latex paint and business wastes will not be accepted. This event is sponsored by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, West Cook County Solid Waste Agency (WCC-SWA) and the Brookfield Zoo. For more information, call 708.450.0100.



### Lawnmower buy back, gas can exchange scheduled

Residents can exchange old gasoline-powered lawnmowers for a \$60 rebate toward the purchase of any new electric, battery-powered or non-motorized push mower from 9 a.m. – 2 p.m., Sat. Oct. 9 at the Public Works Center, 131 South Blvd. Residents also may exchange old gas cans for newer, environmentally friendly containers. All mowers and gas cans must be drained of fluids. For more information call 358.5700 or email [publicworks@oak-park.us](mailto:publicworks@oak-park.us).

## Entries sought for fire prevention contest

The Oak Park Fire Department is sponsoring an art and essay contest for students in grades kindergarten through eighth to commemorate *National Fire Prevention Week*, October 3 – 9. Winners and their immediate families will be guests at a dinner ceremony on Wednesday evening, Oct. 6 at the Main Fire Station, 100 N. Euclid. Winners also will receive prizes, a *Certificate of Merit* from the Fire Department and have their entries displayed at Village Hall, 123 Madison St.

### Contest Rules

**Art:** K – third graders may submit artwork on any fire prevention theme, while art of fourth – eighth graders should reflect this year's National Fire Prevention Week theme, *Test Your Smoke Alarms*. The artwork of either category can be any size up to 12 inches by 18 inches.

**Essays:** Fourth – sixth graders may write an essay of 25 – 50 words on the theme *Why Is It Important to Test Your Smoke Alarms*. Seventh-eighth graders may submit an essay of 50 – 100 words on any home fire safety topic. All essay entries should be on standard, 8.5 by 11-inch paper.

**Submissions:** The printed name of the contestant, school name and grade, and home telephone number must be on the back of every item submitted. Entries may be submitted to any Oak Park Fire Station – 100 N. Euclid Ave., 212 Augusta St. or 900 S. East Ave. Deadline for submissions is 5 p.m., Thurs., Sept. 30.

For more information on the contest or fire prevention call 358.5605 or email [fire@oak-park.us](mailto:fire@oak-park.us).

## Alternative concepts invited for Harlem-Ontario Site

A legal notice published in area newspapers invites all interested parties to offer alternatives to the project currently proposed by Whiteco LLC for the publicly owned property at Harlem Avenue and Ontario Street. The legal notice appeared in the *Chicago Tribune* as well as in the *Wednesday Journal* and *Oak Leaves* newspapers. The deadline for submitting alternative proposals is 5 p.m., Mon., Oct. 18. Alternative proposals should be submitted to the Development Services Department, Village of Oak Park, 123 Madison St., Oak Park, IL 60302. State law requires the Village to give other interested parties an opportunity to offer proposals because Tax Increment Finance District (TIF) funds likely will be part of the financing. Any proposal the Village Board deems most viable likely will be required to follow the Planned Development Process, which includes a comprehensive public review, multiple opportunities for public comment and detailed discussion and analysis of the benefits to the community and impact on residents' quality of life. For more information on the Whiteco proposal or the public notice process, call 358.6400 or email [devsvcs@oak-park.us](mailto:devsvcs@oak-park.us).



Village of Oak Park

Village Hall

123 Madison Street

Oak Park, Illinois 60302-4272

OP/FM

Village President

Joanne E. Trapani

Trustees

Diana Carpenter

Galen Gockel

Ray Johnson

Gus Kostopoulos

Robert Milstein

David Pope

Village Clerk

Sandra Sokol

Village Manager

Carl Swenson

Residential Customer Local  
Oak Park, Illinois

Postal Carrier  
Pre-Sort

Permit No. 26  
Oak Park, IL

PAID  
U.S. Postage  
Standard  
Presort

## Public Works recovering from vehicle storage facility fire



The July fire in a Public Works Department storage facility on South Boulevard may have destroyed a number of specialty vehicles parked inside for the weekend, but it didn't severely impact the Village's ability to deliver services. Most importantly, no injuries were reported, either to the firefighters who fought the four-alarm blaze or residents who live nearby. However, two apartments in a 38-unit building just to the west of the Public Works facility were damaged by heat and smoke from the fire, and all building residents were displaced nearly a week while utility services were restored and their homes inspected to ensure their safety. In addition to a variety of vehicles parked inside on nights and weekends, the one-story, 25,000-square-foot

building also housed the municipal vehicle body repair shop and streetlight operations, as well as a range of small equipment, hand tools and vehicle tires. The four-alarm fire drew support from

Bellwood, Berwyn, Cicero, Forest Park, Maywood, North Riverside, River Forest and Stickney. The blaze was brought under control within about an hour and extinguished within another 45 minutes. The Fire and Police departments

were praised by officials and residents for doing an outstanding job evacuating nearby residents and bringing the fire under control. Oak Park had taken over the facility in about 1976. The approximately 60-year-old building had previously housed an automobile dealership. The Village does have insurance on the facility and its contents, so the financial impact is not expected to be severe. Meanwhile, the Public Works Department has begun efforts to replace the lost equipment. Cause of the fire is still under investigation, but is not believed to be of a suspicious nature. For more information, call 358.5770 or email [village@oak-park.us](mailto:village@oak-park.us).

## Families invited to bicycle Ridgeland Historic District

The first in what is hoped will be an annual bike ride through the Ridgeland Historic District is scheduled for 1:30 p.m., Sun., Oct. 3, beginning at Pleasant Home, 217 Home Ave. The event, co-sponsored by the Energy and Environmental Commission, Historic Preservation Commission, Oak Park Department of Public Health and the Oak Park Cycle Club, is especially designed for families. Streets will be closed to vehicles so that young children can enjoy traffic-free streets, while parents can appreciate the historic architecture. Prior to the ride, participants can register their bicycles with the Village, while children learn about simple bicycle mechanics and safety. Walkers are invited to participate, too. For more information, call 358.5700 or email [publicworks@oak-park.us](mailto:publicworks@oak-park.us).