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From: David Powers  
Communications Director  
708.358.5781

Contact: Pete Dame  
Assistant to the Village Manager  
708.358.5778

### **Village Launches Second Phase of Sign Program**

New signs for Oak Park's two historic districts began going up this week, the second phase of a long-term communications program to promote tourism and economic development, and enhance the identity of the Village through markers and identification devices that welcome and guide visitors.

The first phase of the program, completed over the past year, created a wayfinding system to and within the greater Downtown Oak Park area, erected gateway signs on light poles at Village borders and entrances to business districts, and marked the locations of all Village facilities.

Replacing the Frank Lloyd Wright Historic District and the Oak Park/Ridgeland Historic District signs mounted on wooden posts, the new historic district markers have a different color scheme and will use a combination of decorative metal posts and blade signs installed above street names at key intersections.

In addition to the new signs for the Village's historic districts, this year's program also will include direction maps at each Oak Park transit station, directories for the Harrison business district and lighted pylons at the borders of Downtown Oak Park. More gateway devices also will be added at key entryways to the Village and the wayfinding signage will be expanded to outside of the greater downtown area.

Once all of the gateway devices are in place, banners commemorating the upcoming Oak Park Centennial will be installed on the poles. The centennial banners, the first to use the gateway devices' built-in banner holders, are scheduled to go up later in the summer.

Future plans include new signs for all Village parking facilities. Parking directional signs for the south Oak Park Avenue business district at the Eisenhower expressway also are planned.

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Nicholas Associates, of which Oak Park resident Nicholas Sinadinos is the principal, designed the signs, under the direction of an ad hoc committee of Village staff, business association and tour attraction representatives, and members of the Community Design and Historic Preservation commissions. The full Historic Preservation Commission reviewed the historic district signs, in particular, during the design stage.

Andco Industries, an award-winning architectural signage company in North Carolina, was selected through competitive bid to manufacture and install the new signs.

Approved by the Village Board in 1998 as part of an overall Village identity program, the wayfinding sign system was recognized last September by the Illinois Municipal League as an innovative project and featured at the league's annual convention. Some of the existing signs that are being replaced are more than 25 years old and are deteriorated, conflicting and outdated.

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