



**For Immediate Release:** 10.10.02

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### Board Begins 2003 Budget Process

The Village Board has scheduled a series of meetings to discuss the proposed 2003 budget for the fiscal year that begins on January 1. Meetings are scheduled for 7 p.m., Oct. 14, 22 and 29, and Nov. 7, with Nov. 12 set aside should more time be necessary.

Public comment will be taken at a formal public hearing at 7 p.m., Mon., Nov. 18, with an official vote scheduled at the following regular board meeting, which begins at 7:30 p.m., Mon., Dec. 2. All meetings will be held in Village Hall, 123 Madison St. and broadcast live on VOP-TV6, the Village's cable television station.

The council-manager form of government under which Oak Park operates requires the Village manager to prepare an annual budget and submit it to the Village Board, which has the final authority over how dollars are allocated.

"As we look forward to 2003, our financial position in the General Fund and other operating funds continues remain healthy in light of the current economic conditions and are sufficient to provide current service levels as well as enhancements in the Village's enforcement functions," Village Manager Carl Swenson wrote to Board members in his cover statement to the budget document.

Highlights of the proposed \$105 million budget include new youth services and crossing guards for the Police Department, money to explore creating a municipal animal shelter, stepped up building code enforcement, including commercial building garbage handling, and a streamlined, in-house parking management and enforcement program.

The proposed 2003 budget also recommends continuing the long-range Capital Improvement Program, with emphasis in the coming year on alley reconstructions, and continuing focus on local street and sidewalk improvements.

With revenues from economically sensitive sources such as sales taxes remaining relatively consistent over 2002, the proposed budget does not recommend any increase in the Village share of the property tax levy. In fact, the Village's portion of property tax bills is projected to decline slightly.

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The proposed 2003 budget does recommend increases in some users fees, including a 1 percent increase in the liquor tax, currently at 2 percent , a new one cent per pack of cigarettes, the maximum allowed under state law, and a one cent per gallon increase in the gasoline tax, currently one cent per gallon.

A summary of the proposed 2003 Budget is available in an Adobe Acrobat Portable Document Format (PDF) file on the Village's website at <http://oak-park.us>. Click "Departments" then "Finance" for the link. The complete text can be reviewed from 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m., Monday – Friday, in the Finance Department at Village Hall, 123 Madison St. For more information call 358.5460 or email [finance@oak-park.us](mailto:finance@oak-park.us).

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