



Chief Sustainability Officer

The Village of Oak Park, Illinois (Pop. 54,583) is seeking an innovative and collaborative leader for the position of Chief Sustainability Officer. The incumbent will lead on issues related to environmental sustainability and resilience and cross-departmental policy and planning as the Village implements Climate Ready Oak Park, a comprehensive and long-range plan developed in response to the global climate crisis. The Chief Sustainability Officer operates in a leadership capacity out of the Village Manager's Office, serving on the Village's executive team and is expected to be a regional leader in the climate, sustainability, and environmental justice movement. The successful candidate will exemplify the Village Organization's core values of community, connection, service and respect.

Chief Sustainability Officer



About Oak Park

Located just nine miles west of downtown Chicago, the Village of Oak Park offers a distinctive urban/suburban lifestyle in a thriving, multi-cultural community. Well-known for progressive values, tree-lined streets and bustling business districts, Oak Park serve as an ideal place to live, work and play. As a long-standing community of choice, the Village benefits from convenient access to local and regional transit, high quality public schools, and arts and cultural attractions including Frank Lloyd Wright's home and studio and his acclaimed Unity Temple, which was recently designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The people who live, work and play in Oak Park have a strong sense of community. Intentionally and proudly diverse in race, religion, ethnicity, age, income level and lifestyle, Oak Park is committed to diversity, equity and inclusion principles that welcome, respect and encourage the contributions of all of its community members. With a tradition of citizen involvement, and accessible and supportive

local government, the Village invites active participation in decisions that affect community members lives, families and way of life.

Bounded on the east and north by the City of Chicago, on the west by River Forest and Forest Park and on the south by Cicero and Berwyn, Oak Parkers know that all of our lives are interconnected and collaboration and cooperation are necessary to solve some of our community's most pressing challenges. Actively involved in regional sustainability efforts, Oak Park's climate action plan is a model for local governments looking to chart a sustainable path into the future.

About the Position & Department

The Chief Sustainability Officer reports directly to and provides complex administrative support to the Village Manager who reports to the Village Board in a Council-Manager form of municipal government. The position plans, directs, manages and oversees all activities and operations of the Office of Sustain-



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ability including sustainability staff and/or contractors and will work closely with a variety of internal and external stakeholders advancing Climate Ready Oak Park and other related goals through policy, programming, consulting, education, outreach and engagement. Significant productive collaboration with key operating departments will be critical to the success of the role and all sustainability initiatives. The Chief Sustainability Officer will serve as the staff liaison to the Environment and Energy Commission and may provide subject matter expertise to other inter-governmental partners and community groups both in Oak Park and throughout the region.

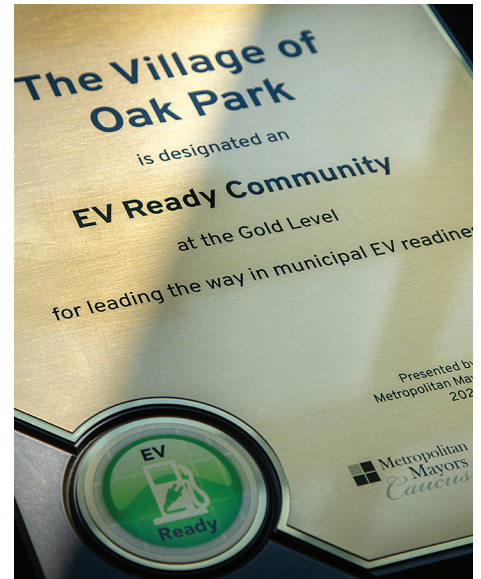


The Chief Sustainability Officer oversees 1.5 FTEs and manages the Village's Sustainability Budget which includes \$1.2M in budgeted expenditures in FY24. The incumbent will have the opportunity to make additional hires upon appointment.

In addition to delivering upon Climate Ready Oak Park's commitments, identified priorities and programming for the Office of Sustainability and Resilience will include:



- **One-Stop Shop Initiatives:** Establish and maintain a comprehensive online and physical resource hub providing residents and businesses with easy access to information, tools, and resources for sustainable living and practices.
- **Green Certification Programs:** Implement certification programs for businesses and residences, recognizing and promoting sustainable practices



through a one-stop certification process.

- **Community Education and Outreach Programs:** Conduct regular workshops and seminars on sustainable living, waste reduction, energy conservation, and other relevant topics to educate and engage the community.
- **Community Events:** Organize and participate in community events promoting sustainability, including fairs, clean-up drives, and environmental awareness campaigns.
- **Technical Assistance to Residents and Business Community on Energy Audits:** Offer technical assistance by supporting energy audits for residents and businesses, providing recommendations for energy efficiency improvements.
- **Waste Management Guidance:** Provide guidance and technical support to residents and businesses for effective waste management practices, recycling initiatives, and reduction of environmental impact.

- **Collaborations with Governmental Partners on Policy Advocacy:** Collaborate with local, regional, and national government entities to advocate for sustainable policies and initiatives, ensuring alignment with broader sustainability goals.
- **Interagency Partnerships:** Establish partnerships with various government agencies to streamline efforts, share resources, and collectively address sustainability challenges.
- **Partnerships with External Organizations** (e.g., Work closely with C-4, Plan It Green, Oak Park-River Forest Community Foundation on joint initiatives, research projects, and community-driven climate resilience programs.

Minimum Qualifications

Five years of progressively responsible experience in the sustainability or environmental field, including at least one year in a supervisory role AND possession of a master's degree from an accredited college or university with major coursework in

sustainability, urban planning, public policy, public administration, environmental science or a related discipline. Other combinations of experience and/or education that meet the minimum requirements may be substituted for education requirements including community-based work.

Preferred Qualifications

Possession of one or more of the following: American Institute of Certified Planners credential (AICP), Professional Engineer (PE) License, Registered Landscape Architect (RLA), ISSP Sustainability Professional, Certified Climate Change Professional (CC-P), Leadership in Energy or Environmental Design Accredited Professional (LEED-AP) credential or similar nationally recognized Green Building organization, Certified Energy Manager (CEM).

Compensation & Benefits

The Village of Oak Park offers a highly competitive benefits package that includes Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (IMRF)

participation, health and life insurance, vacation, sick leave and other benefits including flexible working arrangements. The annual salary range for the Chief Sustainability Officer is \$110,000 +/- depending on qualifications.

Residency within Oak Park is strongly desired. The Village will provide assistance to candidates who relocate to Oak Park within 9 months of selection.

The ideal candidate will:

- Possess solid environmental knowledge including an understanding of environmental issues, conservation principles, and sustainability practices.
- Be an active strategic planner with an innate ability to develop and implement a comprehensive sustainability strategy aligned with the village's goals and objectives.
- Be an expert at policy development with an experience in creating and implementing sustainability policies and procedures.
- Thrive on stakeholder engagement with strong skills in engaging with and building partnerships among various stakeholders, including local government, community members, businesses, and non-profit organizations.
- Present strong communication skills to articulate sustainability goals, initiatives, and achievements to both internal and external audiences.
- Demonstrate project management acumen with the ability to manage and oversee sustainability projects from incep-

tion to completion, ensuring deadlines and budgets are met.

- Be up to date on issues of regulatory compliance including knowledge of local, state, and federal environmental regulations and the ability to ensure compliance with relevant laws.
- Serve as a locus of innovation and problem solving with the capacity to identify innovative solutions to sustainability challenges and address problems effectively.
- Be a leader in collaborative efforts, possessing the ability to collaborate with and influence other departments within the village government to integrate sustainability considerations into various functions.
- Remain focused on education and training, demonstrating the capability to develop and deliver educational programs

and training sessions on sustainability for both internal staff and the community.

- Have financial acumen, understanding the financial aspects related to sustainability initiatives, including budgeting and cost-benefit analysis.
- Demonstrate strong networking skills, establishing and maintaining a network of sustainability professionals, experts, and organizations for knowledge sharing and collaboration.
- Remain adaptable, understanding the need to remain flexible to adapt to evolving sustainability trends, technologies, and best practices.

These competencies would empower a Chief Sustainability Officer to lead the Village of Oak Park towards a more sustainable and environmentally just future.

How to Apply

To apply, candidates must submit a comprehensive resume, cover letter and contact information for five professional references to Assistant Village Manager/HR Director Kira Tchang at ktchang@oak-park.us. First review of applicants will occur on February 16, 2024.

Candidates may contact Ms. Tchang with any questions

The Village of Oak park commits itself to diversity, equity and inclusion by recognizing that creating mutually respectful, multicultural and equitable environment does not happen on its own; it must be intentional. This includes providing equal opportunities for everyone regardless of race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, ability, military or veteran status or any other protected characteristics.