

2020 By the Numbers: A look at municipal service delivery during COVID-19

It was anything but business as usual in 2020 for the Village of Oak Park's 350 full-time municipal employees.

As the worldwide COVID-19 coronavirus reached Oak Park in mid-March of 2020, municipal employees from every department and every skillset pivoted to focus their wide range of formal education, experience and expertise to providing services unlike those typically required of local government workers.

Public works crews became experts in helping retailers designate safe social distances for their clientele and creating the materials they would need to help their customers comply.

Firefighter-paramedics answered every call for emergency medical services with the real possibility of encountering a highly-contagious virus on every ambulance run.

And public safety responsibilities expanded to include educating groups of maskless citizens in the parks and neighborhoods, and explaining tough state and local emergency regulations.

Police officers often were the face of government as they helped small business owners understand the changing rules and distributed more than 1,300 handmade masks to anyone in need.

The Health Department — one of only a handful of state-certified municipal public health departments in Illinois — took on the formidable role of tracking and reporting positive cases, and disseminating mountains of information on how to avoid getting infected, recognizing the symptoms and what actions to take if infection was suspected.

Health Department staff also distributed thousands of personal protection equipment (PPE) items, including to local businesses, social service agencies and healthcare providers.

By the end of 2020, the local health department would begin to take on the daunting task of distributing vaccines as well.

Those Village employees whose duties allowed worked from home, while others adopted split shifts and discrete work groups so that they could be quarantined should a positive case be identified among their ranks.

But the critical, yet often unseen, municipal services upon which citizens rely didn't stop. Oak Park's more than **100 miles of Village-owned streets, 500 alleys, nearly 20,000 parkway trees, 7,000 lighting fixtures, 104 miles of water mains, 110 miles of sewer mains, eight miles of bicycle lanes** and some **4,000 public parking spaces** still required attention.

The streets had to be plowed, water leaks fixed and building permits issued. Meanwhile, the revenues that support services fell as many typical fees and fines were temporarily reduced or waived to lessen the impact on Oak Park residents whose jobs had also been affected by the pandemic.

So how did the Village do in 2020 with maintaining critical municipal services in the midst of a worldwide pandemic? Here's snapshot of some of their activities from the year just ended...

IMPROVING INFRASTRUCTURE



- 4,007** feet of new water mains installed
- 3,771** sidewalk squares replaced
- 3,144** potholes patched with 52.4 tons of asphalt
- 2,246** feet of new sewer main installed
- 1,463** lane miles of streets swept
- 677** street signs replaced
- 628** street lamps replaced
- 159** Sidewalk ramps upgraded to ADA standards
- 4.8** miles of streets micro-paved
- 2.35** miles of streets rebuilt and resurfaced



SUSTAINING THE ENVIRONMENT

- \$340,055** in disposal fees saved by diverting 46 percent of all residential waste from landfills
- 224,000** gallons of storm water runoff diverted from sewers via 17 grant-funded residential flood control projects
- 10,797** tons of garbage hauled away
- 4,466** tons of household recyclables collected
- 3,163** tons of yard waste and food scraps composted, including from the 2,176 households participating in food scrap collection program
- 101** tons of household hazardous waste materials collected from 2,143 stops

PROTECTING THE PUBLIC



- 56,272** Police responses, including calls, traffic stops, vacation property checks and alarm/security checks
- 7,218** fire and emergency medical service calls
- 5,599** trees trimmed, 327 removed and 128 planted
- 1,760** tons of salt spread during 16 separate snow events
- 1,460** property code violations reviewed
- 1,239** fire hydrants tested, 27 repaired, 13 replaced
- 418** buildings with fire protection systems inspected
- 145** health complaints investigated
- 129** public health inspections performed
- 33** private security cameras registered — 94 videos uploaded for Police review

SERVING THE COMMUNITY



- \$1,879,563** in federal grants distributed to help low- and moderate-income residents and the homeless
- \$584,617** allocated to support affordable housing programs
- 158,817** mobile parking meter transactions processed
- 58,304** overnight parking passes processed online
- 43,154** service requests answered by the Public Works Department
- 3,987** local ordinance and parking citations administratively adjudicated at Village Hall
- 2,147** animals licensed
- 1,800** hours contributed by 148 volunteers on 21 advisory boards, committees and commissions
- 1,412** requests processed under the Illinois Freedom of Information Act — 747 for Police reports and related documents
- 1,227** community relations issues addressed, including tenant/landlord disputes and neighbor conflicts
- 407** rental dwelling licenses issued
- 372** graffiti hits removed
- 54** Sewer Backup Prevention Grants approved for \$181,178
- 42** meetings of the Village Board and its committees — more than 40 issues of public policy deliberated
- 30** animals rescued



BUILDING THE COMMUNITY

- \$8,600,000** in sales and use taxes generated — \$6,400,000 by local businesses
- \$1,837,603** in building permit fees collected
- 5,001** construction, commercial and residential property inspections performed
- 4,349** zoning-related building permits reviewed
- 3,586** building permit applications submitted — 100% online
- 1,797** historic preservation property renovation permits reviewed
- 992** business licenses issued, including for 63 new businesses
- 78** liquor licenses issued, including 4 new



COMMUNICATING INFORMATION

- 1,962,258** website page views — 57.6% on a mobile device
- 154,047** minutes of VOP-TV programming on Village YouTube channel and other social media platforms
- 25,047** online views of Village Board and citizen commission meetings — 65% on a mobile device
- 17,963** Village Facebook followers
- 10,280** Village Twitter feed followers
- 5,579** Village Instagram followers
- 4,836** enews list serve subscribers