



Village Manager's Report
Week ending November 30, 2018

Meetings scheduled for next week:

- Monday, Dec. 3:
 - Regular Meeting, 7 p.m., Council Chamber
- Tuesday, Dec. 4:
 - Environment & Energy Commission, 7 p.m., room 124
- Wednesday, Dec. 5:
 - Citizen Involvement Commission, 7 p.m., room 101
 - Community Design Commission Special Meeting, 7 p.m., Council Chamber
 - Madison Street Coalition, 2 p.m., room 101
- Thursday, Dec. 6:
 - No meetings scheduled
- Friday, Dec. 7:
 - No meetings scheduled

Infrastructure grants – The [Metropolitan Water Reclamation District](#) has awarded the Village \$1.18 million in grants for green alley improvements and a rain garden at the Public Works Center. By supporting these two projects, the grants will allow the Village to reduce an upcoming bond issue planned for alley improvements. Oak Park was among 18 communities and organizations that will share nearly \$9 million in MWRD green infrastructure project grants. Oak Park's share was second only to Park Ridge, which will receive \$1.3 million for a green parking lot at a public library. More details on the local projects will be provided as the 2019 construction season begins. [Click here to view a list of all grant recipients...](#)

Affordable housing exemption retained – When [the Illinois Housing Development Authority](#) releases its new list of communities that are exempt from the [Affordable Housing Planning and Appeal Act](#), the report is expected to note that Oak Park's share of affordable housing has increased to 22.6 percent from 18.4 percent since the report was last issued in 2013. The new IHDA analysis is expected to be released in December. The act, passed by the Illinois General Assembly in 2003, was intended to address the lack of affordable housing as home values outpaced household incomes. Under the statute, if at least 10 percent of a municipality's year-round housing stock is determined by IHDA to be affordable, these local governments are not required to formally make affordable housing part of economic development planning processes. IHDA calculations are based on a regional Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) perspective, which uses a regional Area Median Income (AMI).

Snow response – Public Works crews battled one of the worst November snowstorms on record beginning Sunday (Nov.25) evening and continuing through the night and well into Monday. About six inches of heavy wet snow, combined with high winds, created extremely hazardous driving conditions, damaged trees and brought down communications lines across the community. The cold temperatures quickly turned everything into ice complicating the response. Salting and plowing continued into Tuesday and Wednesday, as crews moved from roadways to clearing on-street permit parking areas and responded to calls from residents about sagging wires and damaged trees. Street Lighting Division staff also had to clear snow and ice from traffic signals where LED bulbs did not generate enough heat to melt the snow covering mostly north-facing fixtures, as well as repair two street light poles that were damaged in vehicle accidents related to the road conditions. Water & Sewer Division crews also had to fix a water main break at 730 S. Cuyler Ave., work that was complicated by the snow and ice.

Documentary and dinner – A recent [Dinner & Dialogue](#) gathering to discuss the *America to Me* documentary drew nearly 50 residents to Unity Temple for a discussion about the impact of the film on the community. The event, which was sponsored by the [Community Relations Commission](#) and the [Unity Temple Restoration Foundation](#), offered participants an opportunity to meet fellow residents, discuss what the documentary meant to them and share ideas on how Oak Park and River Forest High School and the community could best address the issues raised in the film. Focus groups also were recruited for two future Dinner & Dialogue gatherings. A grant from Illinois Humanities, the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Illinois General Assembly helped pay for the event, which was much larger than typical Dinner & Dialogue gatherings.

Flexhouse update – Work is wrapping up at [Flexhouse](#), the live/work townhome project at 200-221 Harrison St. [Ranquist Development Group](#) reported that it had recently closed on the sale of the four townhomes in the center portion and is currently rehabilitating the two vintage brick buildings at each end of the project for mixed-use purposes.

South Boulevard streetscape update – About 200 feet of old pavement has been removed so far along the Eleven 33 development site on South Boulevard west of Harlem Avenue in preparation for pouring the concrete base for the new brick street. By using heated tents and insulation blankets, South Boulevard between Harlem Avenue and Marion Street could be completely reopened to traffic by mid-December. The paving of the cul de sac on Maple Avenue just south of the development that was planned for this week was delayed until next week by the weather.

Miscellaneous project updates – Nicor completed installing services for the Albion development on Forest Avenue between Ontario and Lake Streets with restoration remaining. ComEd was expected to begin installing services to Albion by the end of this week or early next week. The sidewalk along the Lake Street frontage of the [District House Development](#) at Euclid Avenue has reopened now that crews have finished installing the bluestone. Lighting, bike racks, planter boxes, watering system and benches still need to be installed to complete the streetscape.

Construction updates – Oak Park Avenue reopened to traffic this week as the underground work for the sewer relief project on Berkshire Street between Grove and

Linden Avenues progressed. However, Oak Park Avenue will need to be closed again for about a day next week for final restoration of the intersection. The project will be suspended for the season after the remaining underground work is completed, with pavement restoration scheduled for early spring. The last remaining site for the annual water valve repair and replacement program was expected to wrap up this week at Harlem Avenue and Augusta Street, with area restoration set for next week. Work underway to correct drainage issues along the pedestrian pathway at the Holley Court Garage is expected to continue into next week.

Employee news – The Development Customers Services Department recently welcomed two new employees to the Permits Processing Division. Eric Balthazar is a new Building Inspector and Tineshia Patterson-Moss is a new Permit Processing Technician. Eric is certified by the International Code Council and previously worked for a company that provides building inspections for municipalities throughout the western suburbs. Tineshia brings more than 20 years of customer service experience working with Chicago Housing Authority contractors and as a private manager for a general contracting company. Her role with the Village will entail helping customers secure permits and schedule inspections for construction projects.

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