

## Oak Park named state's first municipal arboretum

**D**ecades of commitment to nurturing, diversifying and protecting its urban forest has earned Oak Park recognition as Illinois' first — and the nation's fourth — municipal arboretum.

The accreditation came from the venerable Morton Arboretum, which created the program to encourage knowledge, experience and resource sharing among keepers of tree-focused public gardens.

What makes Oak Park's accreditation unusual is that it is for the entire Village, rather than for a specific, defined area within a community such as a park.

The Village and Park District of Oak Park submitted a joint application for accreditation through Morton's ArbNet Arboretum Accreditation Program.

Together, the two Oak Park taxing bodies share responsibility for the more than 21,000 trees on public property throughout the Village's four and a half square miles.

To be considered for accreditation, an applicant must have more than 100 different species of trees and an identification system. The applicant also must have at least one paid arboretum



*The Village and Park District formally acknowledged the arboretum accreditation at an Arbor Day event that included students from the Green Club at Beye Elementary School planting saplings grown from the acorns of some of Oak Park's oldest oak trees.*

employee, policies that govern tree care and offer public education programs.

A recent survey of all of the trees on public property in Oak Park played a key role in earning the accreditation.

The species, size and condition of 18,744 trees were catalogued on Village-owned property, and the Park District tallied another 2,572 trees on its properties. Together, these trees

represent about 130 different species.

Data from the survey eventually will be available online so that residents can learn details about specific trees on their parkways and in their neighborhood parks.

For more information about Oak Park's forestry programs, call 708.358.5700 or email [publicworks@oak-park.us](mailto:publicworks@oak-park.us).

## Farmers' Market to begin 40th season

**T**he Oak Park Farmers' Market will open its 40th season on Sat., May 23. The Farmers' Market will be held from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. every Saturday from opening day through October in the Pilgrim Congregational Church parking lot, 460 Lake St., one block west of Ridgeland Avenue. In addition to a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables, flowers, bedding plants, honey, cheese, frozen meat, bread and baked goods, the Market also features donuts made on-site, fresh coffee and live bluegrass music. Regional vendors will offer sustainable, organic

and locally sourced goods again this season, including several heirloom products. To help support Market administration, a variety of items will be sold at the information tent, including reusable shopping bags, t-shirts and travel mugs. Non-profit bake sales will be offered each Saturday as well as occasional cooking demonstrations featuring chefs from local restaurants. A majority of the vendors now accept credit/debit cards and Link cards. For more information call 708.358.5780, email [farmersmarket@oak-park.us](mailto:farmersmarket@oak-park.us) or visit [www.oak-park.us/farmersmarket](http://www.oak-park.us/farmersmarket).

## Volunteers needed

The annual Friends of the Market recruitment night is 7:30 p.m., Thurs., May 14 in the community room at the Oak Park Public Library, 834 Lake St. These volunteers become part of this quintessential Village summer experience by helping out at the commissioners' booth on Saturday mornings, volunteering at special events and contributing to the smooth running of the market. This informal orientation session is intended for anyone interested in volunteering or learning more about the Oak Park Farmers' Market.



## A Day in Our Village festival is June 7

**T**he 42nd annual A Day in Our Village festival celebrating diversity and community involvement is scheduled for Sun., June 7. Activity booths representing Oak Park civic, cultural, social service, educational, religious and business organizations will fill Scoville Park, Lake Street at Oak Park Avenue, from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. along with live performances and a food court featuring local restaurants. Rehms Park & Pool, Garfield Street at East Avenue, also will offer many activities from 1 to 6 p.m., with \$10 wristbands for unlimited access to carnival games, rides, entertainment, inflatables, pool and the trains. An Oak Park Township mini-bus will provide free transportation between venues. For more information, call 708.358.5407 or email [community@oak-park.us](mailto:community@oak-park.us).

## Overnight parking passes available online

**O**ak Parkers can request up to 10 temporary, overnight on-street parking passes per month. To use the system the first time, go to [www.oak-park.us/parkingpass](http://www.oak-park.us/parkingpass) and create an account. You will need a credit card, telephone number and the vehicle's license plate number. One account can manage multiple license plate numbers. Then enter the block and street where the vehicle will be parked. The system will keep track of the number of times per month that vehicle is parked. The first three are free, and then your credit card will be billed \$7 for each additional pass you request that month — up to the maximum per vehicle. For information on parking in Oak Park, visit [www.oak-park.us/parking](http://www.oak-park.us/parking).

## Free consultations available

**Sign code...**Business operators considering seeking variances from the Village sign code can get free guidance from the Community Design Commission before submitting a request for formal review. The commission will review and comment on drawings, sketches or photographic examples as well as materials, offering guidance and suggestions on meeting the code requirements and overcoming challenges that would require a variance. Reviews are given during the commission's regular meeting at 7:15 p.m. on the fourth Wednesday of each month. To arrange a conversation with the commission, call 708.358.5440 or email [planning@oak-park.us](mailto:planning@oak-park.us).

**Tree species...**Oak Park residents can get help selecting the right tree species to plant in their yards from the forestry subcommittee of the Community Design Commission. Subcommittee members will help assess the planting site and offer advice on species by factors such as size, habit, texture, growth rate, maintenance and seasonal color. The review is available from 6:30 to 7:15 p.m. at the subcommittee's regular meeting on the fourth Wednesday of each month. Space is limited. Be sure to bring a site plan or plat of survey and information about existing vegetation near the proposed tree location. To schedule a consultation, call 708.358.5440 or email [planning@oak-park.us](mailto:planning@oak-park.us).



## Parkway plantings can pose risks

**P**roperty owners who see the parkways as fertile ground for their green thumbs may actually be putting the trees at risk — not to mention themselves. Digging on parkways can damage tree roots as well as utility lines that run from the streets into homes, including high-pressure natural gas lines. Village ordinance governs the use of the parkways, which are the public property between private property boundaries and the public street. Most parkway planting rules, such as height restrictions to ensure driver and pedestrian sight lines, are linked to public safety and maintaining the health of the Village's urban forest. Raised planters and piling mulch up against the trunks of parkway trees — or volcano mulching — is prohibited because of their harmful effect on healthy tree growth. The same goes for hard surfaces, such as pavers, railroad ties, timbers, fencing or other structures that can damage tree roots, create habitat for harmful insects and restrict proper root growth. Using fertilizers and pesticides on parkway plantings is prohibited as well since pedestrians and pets abound in our walkable community. And should the Village or a public utility company need access to the sewer, water or natural gas lines that run beneath the parkways, any plantings are almost sure to be damaged beyond routine, basic restoration standards. Parkway also are likely poor sites for anyone considering an urban vegetable garden. Given the winter road salt spray and frequent use of parkways by the Villages more than 3,000 registered dogs and cats, most experts would say a raised garden in a back yard is a better site choice — especially since it also can be fenced in to keep out the rabbits, opossums and other wild animals that share the community. Any resident who wishes to plant something other than grass on the parkway adjacent to his or her property should contact the Village forester for guidance prior to purchasing plants or beginning to dig. Just call 708.358.5700 or email [publicworks@oak-park.us](mailto:publicworks@oak-park.us).

## Please — no swings in trees

**T**ree swings in parkway trees may appear fun, but they threaten the health of the trees and safety of passersby. That's why it is illegal to attach any rope, wire, nail, sign, poster or any other manmade object to trees and shrubs located on Village property. For more information, call 708.358.5700 or email [publicworks@oak-park.us](mailto:publicworks@oak-park.us).

## Help keep Oak Park beautiful



**Alley clean-up...**The Village's alley clean-up program, developed by the Keep Oak Park Beautiful committee, provides free plastic bags, refuse stickers, disposable rubber gloves and information on organizing a safe and

successful event. The committee will monitor the program by taking before-and-after photographs for the regular reports issued to Keep America Beautiful, Inc. Call 708.358.5700 or email [publicworks@oak-park.us](mailto:publicworks@oak-park.us) for more information.

**Adopt a block...**Residents, community groups and business owners are invited to adopt a block by committing to removing litter at least once a month for a year. The Keep Oak Park Beautiful committee will provide trash bags, refuse stickers, gloves, safety vests and an adopt-a-block sign listing the name of the participating individual or group. Call 708.358.5700 or email [publicworks@oak-park.us](mailto:publicworks@oak-park.us) for more information.

**Limit leaf blower noise...**The use of gas-powered leaf blowers emanating more than 65 decibels or failing to meet federal emission regulations is prohibited from June through October. The ban applies to both landscapers and homeowners. Gas-powered blowers that emanate fewer than 65 decibels and meet emission standards may be used during the ban if they have been tested and approved by the Village. For more information call 708.358.5700 or email [publicworks@oak-park.us](mailto:publicworks@oak-park.us).

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## Parking restrictions eased for holidays

**A**s a courtesy to residents and their guests, the overnight parking ban will not be enforced on most Oak Park residential streets during several holidays in the months ahead. Restrictions remain in effect in overnight permit areas, such as Village-owned lots, on-street enclaves and on-street overnight parking zones. All other parking regulations also remain in effect, including daytime posted restrictions and regulations related to traffic and public safety. For more information on parking in Oak Park call 708.358.7275 or email [parking@oak-park.us](mailto:parking@oak-park.us).

### Memorial Day

Ban Lifted: 2:30 a.m., Sat., May 23  
Ban Resumes: 2:30 a.m. Wed., May 27

### July 4

Ban Lifted: 2:30 a.m. Fri., July 3  
Ban Resumes: 2:30 a.m. Mon., July 6

### Labor Day

Ban Lifted: 2:30 a.m. Sat, Sept. 5  
Ban Resumes: 2:30 a.m. Wed., Sept. 9

### Thanksgiving

Ban Lifted: 2:30 a.m., Wed., Nov. 25  
Ban Resumes: 2:30 a.m. Mon., Nov. 30

### Christmas/New Year's

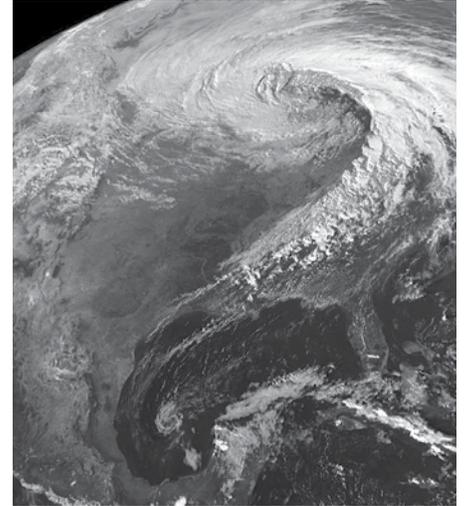
Ban Lifted: 2:30 a.m., Sat., Dec. 19  
Ban Resumes: 2:30 a.m. Mon., Jan. 4

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## Municipal jobs posted online

**R**esidents interested in working for the Village can keep track of job openings at [www.oak-park.us/jobs](http://www.oak-park.us/jobs), where descriptions and qualifications are posted for specific positions. Most open positions require applicants to fill out an employment application and equal employment opportunity form, which can be submitted digitally. Separate forms must be submitted for each position since applications are not retained once a position is filled. The Village receives a number of applications and does not reply to each submission. Applicants are contacted only if there is interest in the skills and background for the position applied. Unsolicited resumes not identifying a specific job opening are not accepted or acknowledged. The application process for Police Officer and Firefighter/Paramedic uses a different application form that will be posted as needed for specific recruitment efforts. For more information on Village hiring policies and procedures, email [careers@oak-park.us](mailto:careers@oak-park.us).

## Be prepared for severe weather



**T**ornadoes, lightning, flash floods, damaging winds and destructive hail strike Illinois each spring, summer and fall, sometimes with incredible violence. Being aware of severe weather safety rules and knowing what to do might save your life, which is why the National Weather Service urges you to develop a safety plan for use at home, work, school, vehicle and outdoor activities. For more information visit [www.ready.illinois.gov](http://www.ready.illinois.gov).

**Know the terms...**A tornado watch means severe thunderstorms and tornadoes are possible over the next few hours, so be prepared. A tornado warning means a tornado has been sighted by a trained storm spotter, or intense rotation that will likely produce a tornado has been detected by Doppler radar — get to a place of safety immediately.

**Local warning siren...**The West Suburban Consolidated Dispatch Center (WSCDC), the emergency 911 hub for Oak Park, River Forest, Elmwood Park and Park Ridge, sounds a warning siren when a tornado is sighted within a 10-mile radius. The sirens also are activated at 10 a.m. on the first Tuesday of every month as part of a regular statewide test. For more information, visit [www.oak-park.us/fire](http://www.oak-park.us/fire). Information on severe weather also is posted by the National Weather Service at [www.spc.noaa.gov](http://www.spc.noaa.gov).

## Participants, volunteers, sponsors sought for July 4th Parade

Participants, volunteers and sponsors are being sought for the annual July 4th Parade. June 5 is the deadline to register to be in the parade, which typically attracts more than 75 groups each year. Local organizations and businesses are invited to bring a float, march, play music, carry balloons or banners, ride decorated bicycles, skate, drive vintage cars or just dress up to commemorate the nation's birthday and to celebrate Oak Park's rich diversity. A registration form is available at Village Hall, 123 Madison St., via email to [community@oak-park.us](mailto:community@oak-park.us) and via a link on the Village website at [www.oak-park.us/community](http://www.oak-park.us/community). The Community Relations Commission, which organizes the parade, also needs volunteers on the morning of July 4 to help monitor traffic crossings along the parade route. Sponsorship opportunities are available for businesses and organizations interested in helping support this year's parade with money, goods or services. Call 708.358.5407 or email [community@oak-park.us](mailto:community@oak-park.us) for more information.

## Free fitness classes in the parks

The Park District of Oak Park is offering free summer fitness classes in the parks beginning this month. The program is sponsored in partnership with the Parks Foundation of Oak Park, a community organization created to enhance local parks. Visit [pdop.org](http://pdop.org) for more information.

### ReBoot

Ages 13 and older  
7 to 7:55 a.m.  
Saturdays, May 23–Aug. 29  
East Field, Ridgeland  
Common Recreation  
Center, 415 Lake St.

### Yoga in the Park

Ages 13 and older  
9 to 9:55 a.m.  
Thursdays, May 28–Sep 3  
Mills Park  
217 S. Home Ave.

### Move Before You Groove

All Ages  
4:30 to 5 p.m.  
Sundays, June 14–Aug 9  
Scoville Park  
800 Lake St.

## Yard waste collection underway

Collection of bundled brush and yard waste is underway through November. Bundled brush and yard waste such as grass clippings, leaves, shrubs and vines are picked up along with garbage and recycling on regular refuse collection days from the same collection point. Each brush bundle should be no larger than two feet in diameter and four feet in length and have a green yard waste sticker attached. Yard waste should be in 32-gallon paper bags or rigid containers, each with a green yard waste sticker attached. Stickers are available for \$2.40 each from Oak Park grocery and hardware stores and the Cashier's Office at Village Hall, 123 Madison St. Residents are urged to look for alternatives to bagging yard waste such as mulching mowers, leaf shredders or backyard compost piles. For more information, call 708.358.5700 or email [publicworks@oak-park.us](mailto:publicworks@oak-park.us).

## Recycle unwanted electronics

Residents are invited to recycle their old electronic devices from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., Sat., May 30 at the Public Works Center, 201 South Blvd. Acceptable items include computers, peripherals, laptops, monitors, TVs, cell phones, rechargeable batteries, printers, fax machines, MP3 players, portable digital assistants, video game consoles, video cassette recorders/players, video disk players, zip drives, scanners and microwaves. The program is sponsored by Illinois EPA, West Cook County Solid Waste Agency and Vintage Tech Recyclers. Call 708.358.5700 or email [publicworks@oak-park.us](mailto:publicworks@oak-park.us) for more information.



Clip and Save

### Who to Call

Dial Direct (area code 708)

Village Hall	<a href="http://oak-park.us">oak-park.us</a>
TTY	711
Adjudication	358.5479
Development Customer Services	358.5420
Business Services	358.5425
Neighborhood Services	358.5410
Housing	option 1
CDBG	option 2
Property complaints	option 3
Permits & Inspections	358.5430
Planning	358.5440
General questions	option 1
Historic Preservation	option 2
Zoning	option 3
Finance	358.5460
Utility Billing Inquiries	358.5478
Fire (nonemergency)	358.5600
Human Resources	358.5650
Job Hotline	358.5650
Police (nonemergency)	386.3800
Crime Tip Hotline	434.1636
Public Health	358.5480
Animal Control	358.5680
Public Works	358.5700
Parking	358.7275
Village Board	358.5784
Village Clerk	358.5670
Village Manager's Office	358.5770

### EMERGENCIES

911

### Park District

[www.pdop.org](http://www.pdop.org)

Administration	725.2017
Customer Service	725.2000
Building & Grounds	725.2050
Business Operations	725.2015

### Public Library

[www.oppl.org](http://www.oppl.org)

Main Library	383.8200
Maze Branch	386.4751
Dole Branch	386.9032

### School District 97

[www.op97.org](http://www.op97.org)

Administration	524.3000
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### School District 200

[www.oprfs.org](http://www.oprfs.org)

Administration	434.3107
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### Township

[www.oakparktownship.org](http://www.oakparktownship.org)

Senior Services	383.8060
Youth Services	445.2727
General Assistance	383.8005
Assessor Services	383.8005
Mental Health Board	358.8855

### Stay connected...

-  [oak-park.us](http://oak-park.us)
-  [facebook.com/vopnews](https://facebook.com/vopnews)
-  [twitter.com/vopnews](https://twitter.com/vopnews)
-  [pinterest.com/oakparkil](https://pinterest.com/oakparkil)
-  [youtube.com/vopnews](https://youtube.com/vopnews)

## Vehicle sticker sales begin this month

Village vehicle stickers are scheduled to go on sale this month, as renewal notices go out to the owners of vehicles registered to Oak Park residents.

Every Oak Park resident who owns or leases a vehicle is required to purchase and display a Village sticker annually by July 15. Anyone who misses the deadline must pay a \$20 late fee in addition to the cost of the sticker. Failure to display a valid Village sticker also could result in a \$50 ticket.

The late fee kicks in this year at the stroke of midnight, Tues., July 14.

Residents whose vehicles already are registered with the Village can save 10 percent by renewing online at [www.oak-park.us/onlineservices](http://www.oak-park.us/onlineservices), rather than via mail or in person at Village Hall, 123 Madison St.

Vehicle owners who renew online will have the option to receive next year's renewal notice via email, eliminating the need for a paper notice sent by mail.

First-time vehicle sticker purchasers — and residents who have turned 65 since they last renewed — must come to Village Hall and provide proof of



residency, such as a lease, utility bill or other government-issued item. A driver's license and vehicle information also is required.

A current vehicle sticker is needed to purchase a parking permit.

Renewal forms mailed to current sticker holders include a unique web identification number that allows a vehicle owner to correct or update most data, including address and telephone number, and vehicle information. Online renewals require a credit card and an email address for confirmation.

Anyone who loses the renewal notice will be able to look up their web ID number using the email address or telephone number registered during the

previous year's application.

Residents who would like to renew online, but don't have access to a computer can come to Village Hall where a computer is available to the public for official Village business, or visit a branch of the Oak Park Public Library.

In-person sticker purchases and renewals are available at Village Hall from 8:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. Mondays, and 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Tuesday through Friday. Village Hall will be open for vehicle sticker purchases and renewals from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m., Sat., July 11, but will be closed on Mon., May 25 and Fri., July 3.

Individuals renewing in person are urged to bring their renewal notice to speed up processing.

Vehicle sticker rates vary by type of vehicle and persons age 65 and older, or who have a state-issued handicapped license plate or placard, receive a discount.

For more information call 708.358.7275, option 5, visit [www.oak-park.us/parking](http://www.oak-park.us/parking) or email [parking@oak-park.us](mailto:parking@oak-park.us).

## Ten restaurants honored for cleanliness

Ten Oak Park restaurants received awards from the Oak Park Department of Public Health and Board of Health in recognition for having the highest two-year average inspection scores. Each of these restaurants' food service sanitation efforts earned them a Johnson Restaurant Award, named for Oak Park's first lunchroom that operated in the 1890s at 124 Lake St. The award is presented each year to the 10 top-scoring restaurants. This year's Johnson Award winners were chosen from 76 eligible restaurants. The awards are based on scores from a 45-point inspection survey and averaged over a two-year period. These restaurants are responsible for some of the most complex aspects of food service and meal preparation, including cooking, cooling, reheating and serving. Each of these processes must be carried out to the exacting standards mandated by the Illinois State Food Service Sanitation Code. All licensed food establishments in Oak

Park receive detailed inspections and education from the Health Department, as the Village works with all commercial food handlers to help make sure they meet state safety standards. The Health Department inspects more than 200 food service establishments in the Village every year, from day care centers to senior living facilities and traditional restaurants to cafes. These businesses are divided into three broad categories based on the complexity of their operations. The Johnson Award winners are all restaurants that have fairly complex food service processes and are required to maintain competent management and continuous supervision of every step of their food service operations. This is the 30th year the Johnson Restaurant Awards have been presented. Recipients receive a door decal and a recognition certificate from the Health Department. For more information on the awards, call 708.358.5480 or email [health@oak-park.us](mailto:health@oak-park.us).



### 2015 Johnson Award Winners

**Boss Burrito**, 1110 W. Westgate St.

**Aripo's Venezuelan Arepa House**,  
118 N. Marion St.

**King & I**, 105 N. Marion St.

**Cucina Paradiso**, 814 North Blvd.

**Happiness Restaurant**,  
6222 Roosevelt Rd.

**Jerusalem Café**, 1030 W. Lake St.

**Buzz Café**, 905 S. Lombard Ave.

**Penny's Noodle Shop**,  
1130 Chicago Ave.

**TGI Friday's**, 401 N. Harlem Ave.

**Sagano Sushi**, 731 Lake St.



Village of Oak Park  
Village Hall  
123 Madison Street  
Oak Park, Illinois 60302-4272



Village President Anan Abu-Taleb

Trustees

Peter Barber  
Glenn Brewer  
Adam Salzman  
Colette Lueck  
Bob Tucker

Village Clerk Teresa Powell  
Village Manager Cara Pavlicek

Residential Customer Local  
Oak Park, Illinois

Postal Carrier  
Pre-Sort

Presort  
Standard  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Permit No. 26  
Oak Park, IL

## Village launches historic infrastructure improvement initiative



The 2015 construction season marks the start of an historic initiative to invest an additional \$20 million over the next five years in the Village's vital transportation network and water and sewer systems. Oak Park has more than 600 alleys and 110 miles of streets, many in need of major repair. As available funds have waned over the past several years, repair efforts have fallen behind community needs and expectations, a situation this new emphasis on capital improvements intends to remedy. Plans also are in the works to improve the Village's 105 miles of water lines and 110 miles of sewer, much of which are nearly a century old. For the 2015 construction season 25 alleys will be rebuilt and five miles of roadway will be resurfaced or rebuilt,

including 17 east-west blocks and 19 north-south blocks of residential streets. In addition, the Village will replace a quarter mile of water lines and a mile of sewer mains. For more information on capital improvements planned for the 2015 construction season email [publicworks@oak-park.us](mailto:publicworks@oak-park.us) or visit [www.oak-park.us/construction](http://www.oak-park.us/construction) where a map of all projects is posted.

### Ridgeland Avenue improvements

Work on Ridgeland Avenue is among the most visible example of major infrastructure improvements underway throughout the community. Village contractors began a major sewer project last month that will be followed by crews installing a new street surface. The first phase of the Village sewer project

required closing Ridgeland from Lake Street to Chicago Avenue through much of May. Sewer work then will shift north to between Chicago Avenue and Division Street, where much of the sewer system dates to the 1890s. Construction will require closing this section of Ridgeland Avenue through at least August. Ridgeland Avenue traffic has been diverted west to Oak Park Avenue and around the construction zones during the street closures and Police are discouraging drivers from cutting through neighborhood side streets. Village engineers are working with the Illinois Department of Transportation to coordinate the local sewer project with the street paving schedule. The goal is to have construction crews working on the repaving project finish the related concrete work such as curbs and crossings while the sewer work is underway. This approach, officials say, should make the paving process move quickly once the sewer work has been completed. Ridgeland will be open to traffic during the repaving project, but frequent delays and temporary lane closures are likely as crews grind off the old pavement before installing new asphalt. Parkway repairs and new street markings should wrap up the sewer and paving projects sometime in the fall, barring any significant weather delays. The repaving project is the continuation of the work that began last season at I-290 and made it as far north as South Boulevard before the winter.