



**Village Manager's Report
Week ending April 12, 2013**

Meetings scheduled for next week:

- April 13:
 - Intergovernmental Committee of the Board, 9 a.m., Oak Park Township

- April 15:
 - Village Board Executive Session 6:30 p.m., room 130 followed by Village Board Open Session to approve the release of executive session minutes

 - No scheduled meetings

- April 16:
 - Citizens Police Oversight Committee, 7:30 p.m., room 102

- April 17:
 - Board of Appeals Meeting, 7 p.m., room 101
 - Community Relations Commission, 7 p.m., room 201
 - Oak Park Area Arts Council Board, 7 p.m., room 102
 - Housing Programs Advisory Committee, 7 p.m., room 215

- April 18:
 - Building Codes Advisory Commission, 5:30 p.m., room 215

Save the date reminders (see calendar for all future meetings):

- April 20: Board Outreach Event - Earth Fest, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m., Public Works
- April 24: Tri-Board Meeting, 7 p.m., OPRFHS
- May 6: Village Board – Swearing In reception, 7:00 p.m., room 101, followed by Village Board Swearing in, 7:30 p.m., room 201
- June 2: Board Outreach Event - Day in our Village, 11 a.m. – 6 p.m., Scoville Park

Ridgeland Avenue detour update – The temporary detour on Ridgeland Avenue at Lake Street and South Boulevard may extend through most of next week due to the weather that has delayed the first phase of a project to replace an aging water main under Ridgeland Common. Crews originally expected to open the street late Mon., April 15, but now estimate it could be closer to the end of next week before traffic is allowed through. The contractor was scheduled to start digging on Thursday (April 11) and anticipates about four days of underground work and two days of pavement work before the street is reopened. In the meantime, traffic is being detoured at Lake

Street and South Boulevard, while pedestrian access to the Green Line stop has remained opened.

North Boulevard project delayed – The project to replace the water and sewer mains on North Boulevard west of Oak Park Avenue has been delayed by a ComEd issue at Oak Park Avenue and the extended Ridgeland Avenue detour. The contractor exposed an unrecorded ComEd duct that conflicts with our planned work, but Village engineers were able to tweak the project to accommodate the unexpected issue. Since work must start within the Oak Park Avenue intersection, staff decided it would make most sense to wait until Ridgeland is reopened as traffic is being detoured to Oak Park. Since work is not expected to begin until late next week, the no-parking signs along North Boulevard have been removed until work is ready to begin. Merchants in the business district have been apprised of the situation.

Proposed building code changes update -- The latest updates to proposed changes to our building codes have been posted online for public review through May 1. The latest documents, posted at www.oak-park.us/codeamendments, incorporate extensive input from the community as well as review by the Building Codes Advisory Commission, whose citizen volunteers represent a wide range of related skills, including architecture, plumbing, electricity, HVAC, codes and fire protection. Questions or comments regarding the proposed changes are being directed to building@oak-park.us. The May 1 date is intended to give the Commission and staff sufficient time to incorporate any new information into their recommendations to the Village Board for consideration.

Special tribute – Forestry Division crews installed ribbons and flags along Lake Street from Harlem Avenue to Austin Boulevard in a tribute to River Forest resident and Fenwick graduate Anne Smedinghoff who died recently in Afghanistan. The 25-year-old public diplomacy officer for the U.S. Embassy in Kabul and four other Americans were killed by a suicide bomber as they were delivering children's textbooks.

Complete streets policies recognized – Oak Park has made the top 10 list of communities across the country that enacted the best complete streets policies of 2012, according to [Smart Growth America](http://SmartGrowthAmerica.org), a coalition of advocacy organizations that have a stake in how metropolitan expansion affects the environment, quality of life and economic sustainability. Coming in at number seven just behind Portland, Maine, Oak Park was recognized for its policies intended to make roads safer and more accessible for everyone who uses them, whether walking, bicycling or driving ([click here to read the official announcement](#)). Oak Park was among 125 communities that adopted complete streets policies in 2012. Nearly 500 policies now are in place nationwide, including in 27 states, the District of Columbia and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. Forty-two regional planning organizations, 38 counties and 379 municipalities in 48 states also have policies intended that allow everyone to safely use their roads. [Click here to read the report](#) on the best complete streets policies of 2012.

Public health contributors honored -- Four Oak Park residents and one local hospital were honored for their contributions to the health and well-being of Oak Parkers during [National Public Health Week](#), April 1 - 7. The *Fitzsimmons Award for Excellence in Public Health* is named in honor of Dr. William Fitzsimmons, a volunteer medical consultant to the Oak Park Department of Public Health from 1976-1992

remembered for his compassion toward others, regardless of their race or socio-economic status, a deep love of medicine and dedication to public service. [Click here to see this year's winners.](#)

Police show support for efforts to end sexual violence – Oak Park Police are showing their support for efforts to end sexual violence with teal-colored ribbons tied on the antennae of all marked squad cars during April, which is [Sexual Assault Awareness Month](#). Oak Park Police are joining organizations around the country – including Chicago-based not-for-profit [Rape Victim Advocates](#) – to help raise public awareness and to educate communities and individuals on how to prevent sexual violence.

Pilgrim Church food truck rally – Pilgrim Church, 460 Lake St., contacted the Clerk's Office to ask about a permit for a new event, *The Great Food Truck Rally*, which they hope to hold from noon – 6 p.m., Sat., May 11, the week before the opening of the Oak Park Farmers' Market on the site. Since this event would be on their property, they only need permits from the Health Department. This event could be an opportunity to explore the food truck idea that has been raised to the Board as an occasional event in town.

Water saver kits available – The Housing & CDBG Programs Division still has free water saver kits available to Oak Park residents interested in potentially saving up to 57 gallons of water per person per day. Each kit contains a low-flow shower head and low-flow kitchen and bath faucet aerators. Kits also contain a toilet tank displacement device that can convert any toilet into a low-flow unit. Housing staff will be giving kits away at Earth Fest on April 20, but if you know of anyone who might like a free kit before then, please have them stop by the Housing office or email housing@oak-park.us. If any kits remain after Earth Fest, they will be distributed at A Day in Our Village on June 2.

Green Tuesdays lecture series continues – Local programs and activities will be highlighted on Tues., April 16 in the third in a series of lectures focusing on environmental issues hosted by the Environment & Energy Commission in partnership with local organizations. Now in its eighth year, each *Green Tuesdays in Oak Park* feature speakers who provide regional and local operational insights on each topic. Future programs will include an overview of the Village's pilot composting program (April 23) and an update on water conversation plans (April 30). The lectures are held from 7 to 9 p.m., at the [Oak Park Public Library](#), 834 Lake St. For more information, call 708.358.5700 or e-mail publicworks@oak-park.us.

Loans for accessibility modifications – Forgivable loans of up to \$15,000 each to fund accessibility modifications for homes or apartments are available through the Housing & CDBG Programs Division. Applicants must have a physical or age-related impairment that requires modifications such as ramps, lifts or handrails, including for kitchens and bathrooms. Applicants must also meet income restrictions. Loans will be forgiven over five years. Anyone needing more information can call 708.358.5410 or email housing@oak-park.us.

Public Works activities – In-house crews continued tree trimming between Chicago Avenue and Division Street. Street sweeping began this week with a private contractor focusing on main streets throughout the Village. The Department completed another successful Great Paint Exchange Saturday, collecting paint from

75 households and recycling a share to 12 households. In the meantime, Public Works continues to prepare for the fourth annual [Earth Fest](#) and an open house scheduled for Sat., April 20.

Rare occurrence at Conservatory – Visitors to the [Oak Park Conservatory](#) in the next week few weeks will witness a very rare spectacle – a flower blooming atop a giant agave plant. Known as *century plants*, these desert dwellers bloom just once in their lifetimes. The flower spike on the Conservatory plant is more than 14 feet tall and still growing. The plant's mother bloomed in 1987 when glass panes had to be removed to allow the asparagus-like flower stalk to shoot through the roof. For more information, call 708.725.2400 or stop in at 615 Garfield St. [Click here](#) to view a photo on the Village's facebook page.

###