



**Village Manager's Report
Week ending May 5, 2023**

Meetings scheduled for next week:

- Monday, May 8:
 - Village Board meeting, 7 p.m. in Council Chambers
- Tuesday, May 9:
 - Aging in Place Commission, 6 p.m. in Room 102
 - Community Development Citizens Advisory Committee, 6 p.m. in Room 101
- Wednesday, May 10:
 - Farmers' Market Commission, 7 p.m. in Room 101
- Thursday, May 11:
 - Civic Information Systems Commission, 7 p.m. in Room 102
 - Historic Preservation Commission, 7:30 p.m. in Council Chambers
- Friday, May 12:
 - Fire Pension Board, 9 a.m. in Room 124

**COVID-19 Weekly Reports are posted at www.oak-park.us/covid19
just click on the *Status report bulletin* heading**

ParkOakPark app launches – A one-stop shop for all things related to parking in Oak Park is now available via ParkOakPark, a new custom mobile application that centralizes various parking services. The app, powered by Passport Parking, includes mobile pay-by-license-plate parking, permit and vehicle license sales and parking citation payment and management. It is available for download from the App Store or Google Play. Parkers familiar with Passport Parking may continue to also utilize the Passport app for pay-by-license-plate parking sessions, even as custom ParkOakPark signage is rolled out in the community's paid parking zones. The first phase of custom sign installation is occurring this month at approximately 15 paid parking locations. The remainder of the pay-by-plate signs will be updated by the end of the year. Information about the [ParkOakPark app](#) is included in the [May/June issue of the OPFYI newsletter](#) arriving soon in mailboxes and will be shared via a news release and the Village's digital communications channels in the coming days.

Plan Commission denies application – The Plan Commission voted 7-2 on Thursday to recommend denial of the application proposed by residential neighbors near Rush Oak Park Hospital. The application requested a modification to the H-District zoning regulations regarding height and setbacks. The two commissioners who were in favor of the application were supportive of only modifying the height regulation for the easternmost portion of the campus by reducing the allowed height from 80 feet to 50 feet, this being the parcel directly

south of Belmont Village Senior Living Community. This application will be submitted for Village Board consideration in June.

No Mow May demonstration area – The Village is observing No Mow May by designating the lawn south of Village Hall and the median in the 200 block of Randolph Street as demonstration areas this month. No Mow May is a sustainability initiative to limit lawn mowing during the month of May to allow plants like clover and blue violets to flower to help provide food sources for bees and other insects at a crucial time of the year when floral resources are limited. While the Village is not encouraging resident participation, community feedback could lead to broader implementation in 2024. Village ordinances related to lawn mowing will continue to be enforced this year. Residents can find more information and leave feedback related to No Mow May at www.engageoakpark.com/no-mow-may.

Climate crisis poetry reading – The Village’s Office of Sustainability and Resilience is teaming up with the Oak Park Public Library to present a poetry reading and discussion about the climate crisis at 5 p.m. on Tuesday, May 9 in the Veterans Room at the Main Library, 834 Lake St. Poet Hila Ratzabi will read from her book of environmental poetry, *There Are Still Woods*, and lead a discussion and creative writing exercise on how we can respond to the climate crisis. Marcelle Bondie Keenan, the Village’s Chief Sustainability Officer, will also share updates on local efforts to respond to the climate crisis and ways residents can get involved. More information is available on the Oak Park Public Library website – [click here to view](#).

Short-term rental license milestone – The Village has issued 106 short-term rental licenses in Oak Park, recently crossing into triple figures since the license program began in 2022. [Click here](#) for a map showing the general location of Oak Park’s licensed short-term rental units. In addition, nine more short-term rental applications have been submitted and are currently under consideration for approval. Short-term rentals, through companies such as Airbnb, pay the same 4-percent tax as the Village’s hotel and bed and breakfast businesses. Last year short-term rentals in Oak Park generated \$111,452 in hotel/motel taxes in support of the Village’s general fund.

Business license update – The Village processed 36 business licenses through the first four months of 2023. [Click here](#) for a chart comparing the number of new business licenses issued by month since 2019. Through a joint program between the Village and the Oak Park River Forest Chamber of Commerce, all new business license recipients receive a free six-month Chamber of Commerce membership. A list of new business licenses issued since 2021 is posted at www.pickoakpark.com/newbusiness.

COVID-19 emergency declaration ending – The national public health emergency declaration for COVID-19 will end next Thursday, May 11. Oak Park Health Department health officials say that while this does not signal an official end of the pandemic, which only the World Health Organization can declare, it does mean the end of the U.S. government’s response to COVID-19 as an emergency. With the declaration coming to an end, the availability and access to some services will end, including requirements for private health insurance companies to cover the cost of COVID vaccines and tests. Other changes include reduced

flexibility for telehealth services, the end of automatic enrollment for Medicaid participants and ending food service benefits for children in daycares and schools.

Earth Month wrap-up – The Village’s Office of Sustainability and Resilience and Public Works Department hosted or participated in 11 Earth Month and Arbor Day events as part of a community-wide focus on sustainability during April. The Village also promoted more than 40 other Earth Month events held in Oak Park and surrounding communities via the community calendar at www.sustainoakpark.com. The outreach effort included the Office of Sustainability and Resilience joining the Environment & Energy Commission to discuss Climate Ready Oak Park.

Plans set for Compost Week promotions – The Village is ready to celebrate International Compost Awareness Week from May 7-13 by highlighting the benefits of composting and encouraging participation in Oak Park’s *CompostAble* food scrap composting program. Oak Parkers are invited to enter the Village’s Compost Bingo contest by completing activities related to waste diversion. Simply send the details from a completed [Compost Bingo card](#) to compostable@oak-park.us by May 15 to be entered into a raffle for one of three prizes. The Village is also making kitchen compost pails available for purchase for \$10 per pail at the cashier’s window at Village Hall. The pails are intended to help simplify the transfer of food scraps to the Village’s four compost drop-off locations among residents who live in multifamily buildings or are otherwise not enrolled in the Village’s curbside compost collection program. More information about Compost Week is posted on the Village website at www.oak-park.us/compostweek and will be shared via the Village’s communications channels next week.

Electric vehicle incentives – New federal incentives are available for purchasing an electric vehicle. The Office of Sustainability and Resilience maintains links to information about EV incentives from both the federal and state governments at www.sustainoakpark.com/electric-vehicles.

Fire Department honors fallen firefighters – This week the Oak Park Fire Department is lighting its fire headquarters in red to join with other fire departments across the country in honoring fallen firefighters who have died in the line of duty during the year as part of the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial. More information about the Light the night for Fallen Firefighters initiative and the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation is available at www.firehero.org.

Employee news – The Development Customer Services Department welcomed Charles Hutchings this week as the newest Property Maintenance Community Development Inspector within the Neighborhood Services Division. Charles comes to the Village with a professional background in both property and home inspections. He has also worked as a realtor assistant, security officer and as an intern at a municipal Police Department. He is a graduate of Southern Illinois University-Carbondale.

Property tax assistance workshop – The Cook County Assessor’s Office is hosting a virtual property tax assistance workshop for Oak Park residents from noon to 1 p.m. next Monday, May 8. The workshop is intended to help residents understand their assessment notice, how

to determine if an appeal should be filed and how to file an appeal. Residents can access to the virtual workshop via [Facebook](#) or [YouTube](#). Appeals of the assessed valuations of Oak Park properties will be accepted by the Cook County Assessor's office through May 15. More information is available on the Cook County Assessor's Office website – [click here to view](#).

Pavement preservation project – Pavement crackfilling started this week with work focused heavily on blocks south of the I-290 expressway. The contractor posted yard signs indicating no parking from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. in the 24 hours prior to work beginning. Pavement rejuvenation work is tentatively expected to begin May 8. Road closures associated with the project typically last about one to two hours. [Click here](#) for a map showing where pavement preservation work is scheduled to take place.

Division Street water & sewer update – Underground sewer work will continue through mid-May near the intersection of Division Street and Oak Park Avenue, which remains closed to traffic. Division is also closed between Ridgeland and East avenues while patching and other operations are completed in that section of the roadway. Concrete improvements are expected to continue through May as part of the water and sewer upgrades. Street resurfacing along Division will follow this summer when the sewer work is complete.

Crosswalk repairs on hold – Construction to repair the crosswalks at the intersection of South Boulevard and Marion Street is on hold due to material delays. A temporary fill has been poured, and traffic control has been removed for the duration of the delay. Construction will resume at an undetermined date once materials have arrived.

Alley improvements – Ten alleys are scheduled to be reconstructed this year. Work is expected to begin the week of May 15 starting in the north part of town. Alley closures typically last three weeks.

Pleasant & Marion update – Exterior wall panels are being installed and carpenters are finishing up building sheathing at the new development at the corner of Pleasant and Marion streets. Window installation is ongoing using a mobile crane. Interior framing and mechanical, electrical and plumbing work is also ongoing.

Miscellaneous construction updates – Concrete work associated with the Village's street resurfacing project is continuing to progress on Elmwood Avenue, Ontario Street and various cul-de-sacs, and asphalt milling is expected to begin next week. The contractor for the Nicor Gas project this week televised the 900 and 1100 blocks of S. Elmwood Ave. On Roosevelt Road, IDOT crews are working on sidewalk, curb and brick paver removal and replacement in Oak Park and Berwyn as part of the state's resurfacing project.