



**Village Manager's Report
Week ending July 7, 2023**

Meetings scheduled for next week:

- Monday, July 10:
 - Village Board, 6:30 p.m. at 19th Century Club, 178 Forest Ave.

- Tuesday, July 11:
 - Aging In Place Commission, 6 p.m. in Room 102
 - Village Board, 6:30 p.m. at 19th Century Club, 178 Forest Ave.
 - Transportation Commission, 7 p.m. in Council Chambers

- Wednesday, July 12:
 - Farmers' Market Commission, 7 p.m. in Room 101

- Thursday, July 13:
 - Historic Preservation Commission, 7:30 p.m. in Council Chambers

- Friday, July 14:
 - No meetings scheduled

Flood damaged items being collected – LRS is collecting flood damaged bulk items with no pink stickers required as many Oak Parkers clean up basements after Sunday's heavy rainfall caused widespread flooding in some parts of town. Items should be placed in the regular garbage collection area. Residents are asked to continue attaching pink stickers to any bulk items not damaged by flooding. Garbage trucks will make the pickups on the regularly scheduled trash and recycling collection day over the next few weeks. Residents can also request a special pickup by contacting Public Works at 708.358.5700 or publicworks@oak-park.us. As was the case this past weekend, heavy rain events can overwhelm the region's sewer system, causing sewage and storm water to back up into basements. Tips on ways to prevent the chances of basement flooding are posted at www.oak-park.us/backuppervention.

Sewer backup protection grant funding available – The Village's Sewer Backup Protection Grant Program was established to provide financial assistance to homeowners who install systems to protect their homes from sewer backup during a heavy rain event. The program's intent is to offset a portion of the expense of modifying a building's plumbing system to prevent backflow when Village sewers are at capacity. Eligible homeowners may qualify for a grant of 50 percent of the total cost of sewer backup prevention improvements, up to a maximum of \$3,500 for installing either an overhead sewer system or a backflow prevention valve system. Find more information, including a link to the application packet and answers to frequently asked questions, at www.oak-park.us/sewergrant.

Village launches community biodiversity survey – Oak Park residents are encouraged to complete a new community biodiversity survey to help the Village’s Office of Sustainability & Resilience gather information on where there are existing projects in Oak Park that support biodiversity. The survey is available online at www.oak-park.us/biodiversity. Examples of biodiversity projects include monarch gardens, rain gardens and lighting that is dark-sky approved. The survey also seeks to capture information about properties with green infrastructure such as permeable pavement, bioswales and rain barrels. Information obtained from the survey will help the Village set goals and develop programs for increasing the amount of biodiversity and green infrastructure in the community.

Solar Power Hour event next Wednesday – Oak Park residents and businesses have an opportunity to participate in Solar Switch Chicagoland, a program that combines volume purchasing with community education to make solar panel installation more accessible and affordable. Interested property owners are invited to attend a free informational Solar Power Hour presentation scheduled for 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, July 12 at the Oak Park Public Library Dole Branch, 255 Augusta St. Attendees will learn about the basics of solar energy, its financial implications for a household and how the Solar Switch program works. After the session, interested attendees can sign up for an estimate and connect with the program's vetted solar installers. The event is organized by the Village’s Office of Sustainability & Resilience, the Oak Park Public Library and the Citizens Utility Board. Find more information about Solar Switch Chicagoland, including details about how to register today, at www.solarswitch.com/cookcounty.

Vehicle license deadline – July 14 is the last day to buy or renew an Oak Park vehicle license at the lowest rate. The rate increases by \$20 after the deadline. Every resident is required to purchase a license for each owned or leased motor vehicle. Rates vary by type of vehicle. Failure to purchase a license also could result in a ticket. Residents can purchase and renew online at www.oak-park.us/vehiclelicense. So far, the Village has sold 10,908 vehicle licenses totaling \$694,789 in revenue through the first eight weeks since licenses went on sale May 1. By comparison, during the same eight-week period last year only 6,712 licenses were issued. [Click here](#) for a chart comparing vehicle license sales over the past few years.

Economic vitality update – The Village issued 56 new business licenses during the first half of 2023, putting Oak Park on target for a third straight year of 100 or more new business licenses. [Click here](#) for a chart comparing the number of new business licenses issued going back to 2019. Through a joint program with 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 all new business licenses issued by the Village going back to the start of 2021 can be found at www.pickoakpark.com/newbusiness.

Requests for proposals for affordable housing projects – The Village is issuing a request for proposals (RFP) for the use of the Oak Park Housing Trust Fund resources related to affordable housing projects. Proposals that prioritize home ownership are being sought. Examples of such proposals would include, but would not be limited to, financial assistance to eligible households to purchase dwelling units or financial or in-kind assistance to preserve and/or maintain existing affordable housing. Eligible households are defined as a household with income at or below 80% the Area Median Income (AMI) for for-sale units.

Proposals are being accepted until August 25. This and other RFPs are posted along on the Village website at www.oak-park.us/bid. A direct link to the Affordable Housing Project RFP is also available by [clicking here](#).

Village embraces Plastic Free July – This month marks Plastic Free July, an annual global challenge created to raise awareness of the amount of single-use disposable plastic items in our lives and challenge individual citizens to do something about it. Oak Parkers willing to accept the challenge to avoid single-use plastic can visit www.plasticfreejuly.org and sign a pledge to choose what they will give up for the month. The site also includes more information about the problems caused by single-use plastics and what individuals can do to help.

SNAP/LINK accepted at Farmers' Market – Making fresh produce affordable for all patrons is a priority at the Oak Park Farmers' Market, which has been providing SNAP/LINK card processing since 2011. The Market also offers [matching value coupons](#) throughout the season. For each dollar SNAP/LINK participants spend, they receive a \$1 coupon up to a maximum of \$25 in coupons per cardholder per Market day. Many vendors also accept WIC and Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program coupons. For more information about payment options at the Market, visit www.oak-park.us/farmersmarket. The Market is held from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. rain or shine every Saturday through October at 460 Lake St.

Illinois Made program seeking applications – The [State of Illinois Office of Tourism](#) is accepting submissions from Illinois business owners for the Illinois Made program. The program celebrates makers, creators and artisans who help craft Illinois by hand, inspiring visitors and fellow residents to discover more about the state. Oak Park's own Carnivore, located at 1042 Pleasant St., is a previous recipient of this prestigious Illinois Made designation. Submissions by interested Illinois businesses are due by August 3. Find the criteria and application form at www.illinoismade.com.

Townships hosting school supply drive – The townships of Oak Park and River Forest are teaming up to host a back-to-school drive for student supplies and backpacks. An [Amazon wish list](#) has been created, and anyone interested in donating can place an order that will be shipped directly to Oak Park Township in time for a back to school social event taking place from 4 to 6 p.m. on Aug. 11 at the Oak Park Township office at 105 S. Oak Park Ave. The event will feature a number of fun activities, and Oak Park and River Forest families that attend will be able to pick up free school supplies.

Division Street improvements – Roadway milling is underway and will continue through next week along the Division Street corridor with roadway patching to follow. Concrete removal and replacement are also nearly complete along Division.

Street resurfacing project – Sections of Elmwood Avenue and Ontario Street have been fully excavated and their base reconstructed as part of this year's street resurfacing project. The contractor expects the asphalt to be placed this week and the final surface installed by the end of the month.

Pleasant & Marion update – Window installation is wrapping up this week and the crane onsite at the new development at the intersection of Pleasant and Marion streets is

scheduled to come down next Tuesday. The fire protection systems have passed the fire marshal inspection and the site is mobilizing for elevator installation.

Miscellaneous construction updates – Initial tree protection and layout work is nearly complete and roadway removal is slated to occur next week as part of an improvement project in the area of Forest Avenue and Ontario Street. Construction is now complete in five alleys scheduled for this year's alley improvement project, and the contractor plans to begin work on the final three alleys next week. Along Roosevelt Road, Illinois Department of Transportation crews are crack filling and placing surface course along the roadway as part of the state's resurfacing project.