

## Health Department taking active role in vaccine distribution



*Interim Public Health Director Joseph Terry (left) and Emergency Preparedness Coordinator Gaurav Gaonkar prepare Oak Park's first shipment of vaccination for distribution to local hospitals.*

**V**illage officials have put months of preparation into action now that COVID-19 vaccines are being distributed.

The Oak Park Department of Public Health has been designated a COVID-19 vaccine provider and is receiving doses directly from the state.

Limited supplies of the COVID-19 vaccine meant that allocation priorities were set by the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Healthcare workers at Oak Park hospitals and residents of long-term care facilities were prioritized to receive the first allocations of vaccine.

As more vaccine becomes available, additional priority groups such as first responders and individuals at higher risk for severe COVID-19 illness will be designated to receive the vaccine.

Eventually, the vaccine will be offered to all residents who want it.

As more vaccine doses become available in the coming weeks and months, the Village will announce plans for vaccinating priority groups and eventually all residents. The latest information will be posted online

at [www.oak-park.us/covidvaccination](http://www.oak-park.us/covidvaccination).

Getting a COVID-19 vaccine is the best way to prevent contracting the virus, public health officials say. Vaccination also may protect others around you, particularly people at increased risk for severe illness from the virus.

While receiving the COVID-19 vaccine will not be mandatory, the vaccine is seen as a critical tool for ending the pandemic. Residents are urged to get vaccinated when it becomes available.

Health officials understand that some residents may be concerned about getting vaccinated, but say no steps were skipped during the clinical trials and procedures have remained in place to ensure any vaccine that is approved for use is safe.

Even as optimism rises with the arrival of initial supplies of COVID-19 vaccine, public health officials say mitigation measures such as wearing masks, social distancing and frequent hand washing will continue to be essential for all residents well into the foreseeable future.

For the latest local information on COVID-19, visit [www.oak-park.us/covid19](http://www.oak-park.us/covid19).

### Get the latest COVID-19 information

**Sign up for enews...**Receive the latest local COVID-19 information directly to your email inbox by signing up for Village enews at [www.oak-park.us/enews](http://www.oak-park.us/enews). Updates include details about Oak Park's daily testing, the latest official guidelines related to coronavirus and information about local vaccination efforts.

#### Follow the Village on Facebook, Twitter...

The latest local coronavirus information is shared on the Village's social media accounts. Follow the Village on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/vopnews](http://www.facebook.com/vopnews) and on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/vopnews](http://www.twitter.com/vopnews). Feedback is welcome and staff strives to respond in a timely manner to posted inquiries.

**Emergency alerts...**Sign up for direct alerts by text, email and/or voice message at [www.oak-park.us/notifyme](http://www.oak-park.us/notifyme). Anyone lacking access to a computer can call 708.358.5489 to be added to the voice message alert list. Email [prepare@oak-park.us](mailto:prepare@oak-park.us) for more information.

**Check Village website...**The latest information to help residents, businesses, restaurants and organizations respond to COVID-19 is posted online on the Village website [www.oak-park.us/covid19](http://www.oak-park.us/covid19). In addition to news, links to important local, state and federal information have been posted as well to create a local information repository. Information on vaccination efforts will be posted at [www.oak-park.us/covidvaccination](http://www.oak-park.us/covidvaccination). Oak Park residents with questions about the COVID-19 vaccine can email [covid19vaccine@oak-park.us](mailto:covid19vaccine@oak-park.us).

# 2021 budget reflects impact of COVID-19 on local economy

The municipal budget for 2021 reflects the impact of the COVID-19 coronavirus that dramatically affected most local taxes and fees that are critical to funding essential municipal programs and services.

The 2021 budget is comprised of 35 funds and \$150.7 million in expenditures, excluding interfund transfers.

The budget's \$61-million general fund, which supports most day-to-day municipal operations, allocates about 70 percent of all spending to the vital services provided by the Police and Fire departments. The men and women who fill these critical roles work around the clock, seven days a week, 365 days each year, responding to more than 75,000 service calls in a typical year.

About 10.5 percent of all general fund expenditures will support the Public Works Department, whose workers maintain 100 miles of Village-owned streets, 500 alleys, 18,000 parkway

trees, 7,000 lighting fixtures, 104 miles of water mains, 110 miles of sewer mains, eight miles of bicycle lanes and some 4,000 public parking spaces.

Municipal expenditures are supported by a number of sources including property taxes, sales taxes, user fees, utility taxes and real estate transfer taxes.

While property taxes will fund nearly 52 percent of general fund expenditures in 2021, only 10.3 percent of a local property owner's tax bills goes to fund Village municipal operations. State mandated Police and Fire pensions comprise an additional 5.4 percent of the Village levy.

Increases in some fees went into effect on Jan. 1, including waste collection for residential buildings with five or fewer units that are served by the Village's waste hauling contractor.

The monthly cost for a 96-gallon refuse cart is now \$29.06, up from

\$28.35, and the cost for a 64-gallon refuse cart is \$26.39, up from \$25.75.

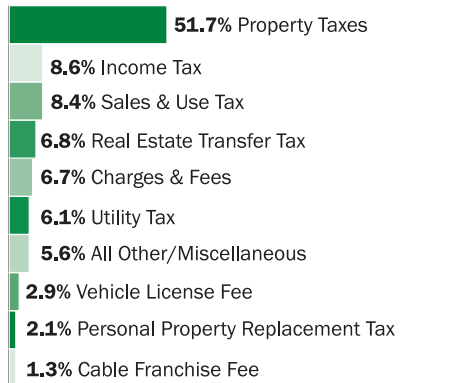
Refuse rates are charged on quarterly water bills. Green yard waste and pink bulk item stickers will remain at \$3.10 each.

Water rates rose to \$10.10 per 1,000 gallons used, up from \$9.81. Sewer rates, which are based on water use, are now \$2.90 per 1,000 gallons of water used, up from \$2.81. The majority of water and sewer fees cover the cost of purchasing Lake Michigan water from the City of Chicago, with a share also helping fund maintenance and improvements to the local water and sewer systems.

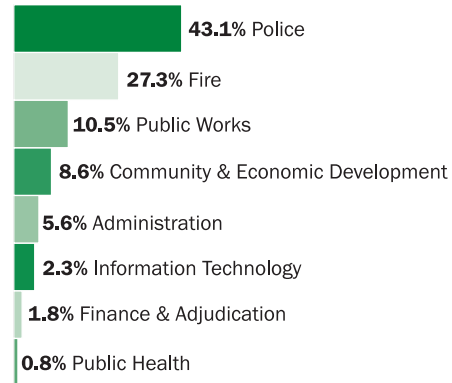
Information on the budget process and copies of the FY2020 and past year's budgets are posted at [www.oakpark.us/budget](http://www.oakpark.us/budget).

## 2021 Budget at a Glance — General Fund

### WHERE THE MONEY COMES FROM



### WHERE THE MONEY GOES



### HOW PROPERTY TAXES ARE DISTRIBUTED



### Finance documents available online

The Finance Department ensures the fiscal integrity of the Village of Oak Park by developing, maintaining and administering all programs related to the accounting of municipal revenues and expenditures. This critical municipal government role results in a wide range of financial documents available for public view online at [www.oak-park.us/financial-reports](http://www.oak-park.us/financial-reports). Among the documents readily assessable online are the following:

- Annual Budgets
- Audit Management Letters
- Bond Rating Service Reports
- Capital Improvement Plans
- Comprehensive Annual Financial Reports
- Financial Reports
- Single Audit Reports
- Tax Increment Finance Annual Reports
- Tax Increment Finance Historical Reports
- Total Compensation Reports

For more information on the role and duties of the Finance Department, call 708.358.5460, email [finance@oak-park.us](mailto:finance@oak-park.us) or visit [www.oak-park.us/finance](http://www.oak-park.us/finance).

## Facts about COVID-19 vaccines



**A**lthough COVID-19 vaccine supplies currently are limited, that is expected to change in the coming months. The plan is to have thousands of vaccination providers available, including doctors' offices, retail pharmacies, hospitals and certified public health departments such as the Oak Park

Health Department. As of Jan. 1, 2021, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention had outlined the following key facts about COVID-19 vaccines:

- **COVID-19 vaccines will not give you COVID-19:** None of the COVID-19 vaccines currently in development in the United States use the live virus that causes the illness. Several different types of vaccines are in development, all intended to teach the immune systems how to recognize and fight the virus that causes COVID-19. Sometimes this process can cause symptoms, such as fever, which is normal and a sign that the body is building immunity. Typically, it takes a few weeks for the body to build immunity after vaccination, which means it is possible a person could be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 just before or just after vaccination and get sick since the vaccine has not had enough time to provide protection.
- **COVID-19 vaccines will not cause you to test positive on COVID-19 viral tests:** Vaccines currently in use or clinical trials in the United States won't cause you to test positive on viral tests, which are used to see if you have a current infection. If your body develops an immune response, which is the goal of vaccination, there is a possibility you may test positive on some antibody tests.
- **People who have gotten sick with COVID-19 may still benefit from getting vaccinated:** Due to the severe health risks associated with COVID-19 and the fact that re-infection with COVID-19 is possible, people may be advised to get a COVID-19 vaccine even if they have been sick with COVID-19 before.
- **Getting vaccinated can help prevent getting sick with COVID-19:** While many people with COVID-19 have only a mild illness, others may get a severe illness or may even die. There is no way to know how COVID-19 will affect you, even if you are not at increased risk of severe complications. COVID-19 vaccination helps protect you by creating an antibody response without having to experience sickness.

More information about COVID-19 vaccines is available online at [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/vaccines](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/vaccines).

## Changes coming to overnight parking pass system

**T**he Village Board is considering a two-tiered overnight parking pass system that would increase the number of passes available each month from March through October when snow plowing and leaf collection are not issues. Currently, residents can purchase up to 10 overnight passes per license plate per month. Pending final Village Board approval, the program would increase the number of passes to 15 from March through October. As with the current program, the first three passes would be free and the additional passes \$7 each. Residents also will be able to purchase a pass for multiple nights up to the maximum per month, eliminating the need to request a pass each night when more than one consecutive night pass is needed. The overnight pass system does not override daytime restrictions so vehicles must be moved in areas where daytime restrictions are in place. Residents also can buy seven-day, 24-hour passes to park in either the Holley Court Garage downtown or The Avenue Garage on North Boulevard, just east of Oak Park Avenue. A garage pass, which allows the purchaser to enter and leave as often as needed during the pass period, is \$49 plus Cook County tax, currently at 9 percent. Residents who need short-term overnight parking passes must use the online portal at [www.ppprk.com/park](http://www.ppprk.com/park). For information on parking in Oak Park, visit [www.oak-park.us/parking](http://www.oak-park.us/parking).

## Sign up for updates from your police residential beat officer

**R**esidents interested in receiving timely and informative neighborhood updates from their police residential beat officer, are invited to sign up for monthly newsletters that provide helpful, practical information via email, the content tailored to the neighborhoods they serve. RBOs also hold regular meetings in their neighborhoods — or zones — to discuss issues, report on crime trends, provide crime prevention tips and answer questions. The meetings currently are held virtually due to COVID-19. More information about each officer, as well as a map of the zones and how to sign up for email, is available at [www.oak-park.us/rbo](http://www.oak-park.us/rbo).



NORTH AVENUE		RIDGELAND AVENUE	<b>Zone 1</b> Eric Locke <a href="mailto:elocke@oak-park.us">elocke@oak-park.us</a> 224.301.1608
<b>Zone 2</b> Christine Simkus <a href="mailto:csimkus@oak-park.us">csimkus@oak-park.us</a> 224.301.1132			<b>Zone 3</b> Raphael Murphy <a href="mailto:rmurphy@oak-park.us">rmurphy@oak-park.us</a> 708.305.9779
CHICAGO AVENUE		OAK PARK AVENUE	<b>Zone 4</b> Tracye Love <a href="mailto:tlove@oak-park.us">tlove@oak-park.us</a> 708.613.1795
<b>Zone 5</b> Mike Murphy <a href="mailto:mmurphy@oak-park.us">mmurphy@oak-park.us</a> 224.330.0004			<b>Zone 6</b> Tracye Love <a href="mailto:tlove@oak-park.us">tlove@oak-park.us</a> 708.613.1795
EISENHOWER EXPRESSWAY		EAST AVENUE	<b>Zone 7</b> Derrick Verge <a href="mailto:dverge@oak-park.us">dverge@oak-park.us</a> 708.613.1554
<b>Zone 8</b> John Rumoro <a href="mailto:rumoro@oak-park.us">rumoro@oak-park.us</a> 708.305.9782			<b>Sergeant</b> Samantha Deuchler <a href="mailto:sdeuchler@oak-park.us">sdeuchler@oak-park.us</a> 708.358.5519
ROOSEVELT ROAD		AUSTIN BOULEVARD	

# Village launches community solar program

In 2020, Oak Park became the first municipality in Illinois to launch a community solar savings program. Program participants receive credits on their bills for their share of the electricity generated by a community solar farm. The credits reduce the ComEd electricity supply charges by up to 20 percent.

## How does community solar work?

Community solar projects generate electricity and distribute the power into the electric grid. Virtually any electric customer within ComEd's service territory can participate. Each subscriber receives monthly metering credits based on the size of their subscription. Oak Park participants currently are supporting a new solar installation in Plainfield.

## What are the benefits of community solar?

Community solar projects offer an easy way to support clean energy generation while helping reduce dependence on fossil fuels. Oak Park's program does not have upfront costs, will not lock residents into a long-term contract and guarantees savings if the subscriber follows a few simple steps. Unlike other subscription offers available in the market, the Oak Park community solar program requires no credit check or minimum credit scores.

## How Do I Sign-Up?

Visit [www.oak-park.us/communitysolarsignup](http://www.oak-park.us/communitysolarsignup) to join the waitlist. Residents must provide information from their ComEd bill when signing up. After completing the sign-up form, residents will receive an email from *mc2 Community Solar* with the steps to enroll. Similar sounding solicitations from companies other than mc2 are not affiliated with or endorsed by the Village of Oak Park.

## How Does Billing Work?

The community solar program employs a two-stage billing process. After enrolling, new subscribers receive metering credits on their monthly ComEd statement. Then, after receiving credits from ComEd, mc2 will bill residents for 80 percent of the solar generation credits, leaving customers with 20 percent of the credits. The monthly bill from mc2 will include a report showing how the subscriber's participation in the program impacted the environment during the billing cycle.

For more detailed information on billing and answers to the most frequently asked questions, visit [www.oak-park.us/communitysolarsignup](http://www.oak-park.us/communitysolarsignup). Information also is available at 708.358.5778 or [sustainability@oak-park.us](mailto:sustainability@oak-park.us).

# Fire Department offers winter fire protection tips

More home fires occur in winter than in any other season. Heating, winter storms and candles all contribute to an increased risk. The Oak Park Fire Department offers the following safety tips for residents to put a freeze on winter fires:

- Keep anything that can burn at least three feet from any heat source like fireplaces, wood stoves, radiators or space heaters.
- Plug only one heat-producing appliance like a space heater into an electrical outlet at a time.
- Store cooled ashes from a fireplace or fire pit in a tightly covered metal container, and keep it outside at least 10 feet from your home and any nearby buildings.
- Blow out lit candles when you leave the room or go to bed.

Residents also are urged to install carbon monoxide alarms and test them at least once a month. Often called the invisible killer, carbon monoxide is an odorless, colorless gas created when fuels such as gasoline, wood, coal, propane and natural gas do not burn completely. Carbon monoxide incidents are more common during the winter months. For more information on fire prevention, call 708.358.5600, email [fire@oak-park.us](mailto:fire@oak-park.us) or visit [www.oak-park.us/fire](http://www.oak-park.us/fire).

Clip and Save

## Who to Call

Dial Direct (area code 708)

<b>Village Hall</b>	<b>oak-park.us</b>
TTY	711
Adjudication	358.5630
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
Mayor & Trustees	358.5784
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 Clerk	358.5670
Village Manager's Office	358.5770

## EMERGENCIES 911

<b>Park District</b>	<b>www.pdop.org</b>
Administration	725.2017
Customer Service	725.2000
Building & Grounds	725.2050
Business Operations	725.2015

<b>Public Library</b>	<b>www.oppl.org</b>
Main Library	383.8200
Maze Branch	386.4751
Dole Branch	386.9032

<b>School District 97</b>	<b>www.op97.org</b>
Administration	524.3000

<b>School District 200</b>	<b>www.oprfhs.org</b>
Administration	383.0700

<b>Township</b>	<b>www.oakparktownship.org</b>
Senior Services	383.8060
Youth Services	445.2727
General Assistance	383.8005
Assessor Services	383.8005
Mental Health Board	358.8855
Transportation	383.4806

✉ [oak-park.us/enews](mailto:oak-park.us/enews)

f [facebook.com/vopnews](https://facebook.com/vopnews)

📷 [instagram.com/oakparkil](https://instagram.com/oakparkil)

t [twitter.com/vopnews](https://twitter.com/vopnews)

📺 [youtube.com/vopnews](https://youtube.com/vopnews)

## Weather forecast key to parking when it snows

The Village has specific rules that govern parking when it snows — rules that are enforced seven days a week, including holidays. Residents are urged to monitor local forecasts and plan accordingly. When snow exceeds two inches, all parking is prohibited on the main streets posted as snow routes. Parking on other streets is restricted to one side from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. in residential areas and from midnight to 8 a.m. in designated commercial districts, the side determined by the date. Park on the even-address side of the street on even dates and on the odd-address side on odd dates. To find out if snow-related parking restrictions are in effect, call 708.358.7669 for a recorded message. Cable television subscribers can tune into VOP-TV, broadcast on Comcast channel 6 and AT&T channel 99. Residents who sign up at [www.oak-park.us/notifyme](http://www.oak-park.us/notifyme) will be alerted by text, email or phone. Efforts also are made to post timely information to the Village's social media sites, [www.facebook.com/vopnews](http://www.facebook.com/vopnews) and [twitter.com/vopnews](http://twitter.com/vopnews). The snow emergency parking rules and a list of frequently asked questions also are posted at [www.oak-park.us/snow](http://www.oak-park.us/snow).

**Sidewalk shoveling required...**Property owners who shovel their sidewalks are doing more than making it safer for pedestrians of all ages — they also are complying with the law. Village ordinance requires snow and ice to be removed from the public sidewalk within 24 hours following any snow, sleet or freezing rain. Being a good neighbor is important, too, so property owners are urged to help those who may need help clearing a sidewalk. And remember to clear the crossing ramps to ensure safe travel by individuals with disabilities, especially those in wheelchairs who face extraordinary challenges navigating snow-clogged sidewalks. For more information on the shoveling requirement or help resources, call 708.358.5700 or email [publicworks@oak-park.us](mailto:publicworks@oak-park.us).

## Grants available to help with electricity bills

ComEd is offering one-time grants of up to \$300 each to help low-income residential customers and those who are encountering financial hardship reduce past-due balances during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The grants are part of a range of programs the utility company has launched to assist those most affected by virus, including temporarily suspending cutoffs and offering flexible payment options. Payment assistance is also available to small business customers and nonprofit organizations. To apply for the new grants and other assistance, visit [www.ComEd.com/PaymentAssistance](http://www.ComEd.com/PaymentAssistance).



## Strategies can reduce COVID-19 spread

As COVID-19 continues to spread even as vaccines arrive, public health officials say that everyone should continue to take action to save lives by adhering to the following public health strategies:

- **Wear masks** – Use face masks consistently and correctly, including within the household if there is a person with COVID-19 or a person with a known or possible exposure.
- **Keep distance/limit contacts** – Maintain physical distance of at least six feet from other people when possible and limit number of contacts with people outside the immediate household.
- **Avoid gatherings** – Avoid nonessential indoor spaces and crowded outdoor settings.
- **Identify & isolate cases** – Get tested when exposed to a person with COVID-19, have a possible exposure or when experiencing symptoms. Infected individuals, with or without symptoms, should isolate promptly. Exposed individuals should quarantine.
- **Conduct contact tracing & quarantine** – Individuals diagnosed with COVID-19 should provide names of known contacts. Close contacts should answer the call from the health department, adhere to quarantine and get tested.
- **Protect high-risk groups** – Individuals with underlying medical conditions or risk factors that make them more likely to get very sick or die should limit contact with people who do not live with them and avoid nonessential indoor spaces.
- **Protect healthcare workers** – Essential workers should employ all health strategies to reduce their risk.
- **Postpone travel** – Those who choose to travel by air should follow recommendations for testing before and after travel.
- **Wash hands** – Increase room air ventilation. Wash hands often.
- **Vaccinate widely** – Get vaccinated when appropriate. Continue to follow all preventive measures until an effective vaccine is widely available and enough people have been vaccinated.

More information about staying safe during the COVID-19 pandemic is posted online at [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus).

View with a smartphone camera.



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



Mayor Anan Abu-Taleb

Trustees

Deno J. Andrews  
Dan Moroney  
Simone M. Boutet  
Jim Taglia  
Susan Buchanan  
Arti Walker-Peddakotla

Village Clerk Vicki Scaman  
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

## Make way for tree pruning

Residents are urged to move their cars from the streets when temporary no-parking signs go up to allow private contractors to prune parkway trees quickly and safely during the winter pruning cycle. One third of the Village's 18,000-plus parkway trees are scheduled to be pruned this cycle between Chicago Avenue and North Avenue. Crews follow the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) guidelines for tree care to address three key issues — tree health, resident safety and protecting property from damage. Dead or dying limbs are removed, tree canopies raised to allow for safe vehicle and pedestrian traffic, and appropriate clearances created for adjacent structures and signs. While the pruning may initially appear excessive when no leaves are on the limbs, crews work to ensure that pruning is just right as foliage returns in the spring. With a program that aims to prune every tree on public property once every three years, plans must consider that parkway trees can grow up to two feet each year — or six feet between pruning cycles. The Village's pruning program has proven very successful in minimizing storm damage and reducing ongoing pruning requests. Residents are urged to call 708.358.5700 or email [publicworks@oak-park.us](mailto:publicworks@oak-park.us) with questions or concerns about the type or quality of work being performed by contractors. More information on the care of the nearly 18,000 trees on public property is posted at [www.oak-park.us/trees](http://www.oak-park.us/trees).

## 2021 holiday tree collection schedule

Holiday trees will be collected the weeks of Jan. 4 and 11 from residential properties of five or fewer units served by the Village refuse hauling contractor. Be sure to remove all decorations and stands, and place the tree in the regular collection area before your regular collection day during these two weeks. If your regular collection point is in an alley, be sure to place the tree in the alley and not in the parkway in front of your residence. Since the trees are mulched at a licensed composting facility and used for soil enrichment, please do not leave them in plastic disposal bags or they will not be collected. Trees set out after the collection program ends will require a pink bulk refuse sticker be attached. Stickers are available for \$3.10 each at most local grocery and hardware stores, as well as at Village Hall, 123 Madison St. Wreaths and garlands cannot be collected for recycling because they contain wire — place them in the trash container. For more information, call 708.358.5700 or email [publicworks@oak-park.us](mailto:publicworks@oak-park.us).



## Local businesses working to serve customers safely

Local retailers and restaurants are working to serve their customers safely during the COVID-19 pandemic by



offering services such as delivery and curbside pickup. Merchants

say each order matters and every purchase is important as they navigate the challenges brought on by COVID-19. With the holiday shopping season now complete, continued support for local stores and restaurants is more important than ever. When shopping online, residents are encouraged to look first at local businesses. Visit [pickoakpark.com](http://pickoakpark.com) to learn more about Oak Park's creative, innovative, diverse and committed business community.

### Business loans for local small business...

Applications are still being accepted for a locally administered loan program intended to help Oak Park small businesses that have been negatively impacted by the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic. Loans up to \$10,000 each are available initially to registered local businesses with 30 or fewer employees and average annual gross receipts of less than \$2 million. The loans are from the Village share of federal CARES Act Community Development Block Grant funds. More information is posted at [www.oak-park.us/covid19businessloan](http://www.oak-park.us/covid19businessloan).