

## Local COVID-19 response focuses on vaccinations, essential services

**A**s Oak Park marks a year since COVID-19 upended daily life, Village Public Health officials remain focused on a local response, while still providing essential municipal services.

The Village's most pressing priority is to ensure COVID-19 vaccines are distributed to eligible residents as quickly and equitably as possible, a task complicated by an unpredictable supply of vaccine that often varies from one week to the next.

The Oak Park Department of Public Health is leading the vaccination effort with support from across the entire municipal government organization and a small army of citizen volunteers.

From hosting drive-through COVID-19 vaccination clinics to managing mass vaccination clinics for local educators and other essential workers, the Village has taken an all-hands-on-deck approach to managing these logistically challenging, resource-demanding efforts.

For many municipal employees, the clinics mean double duty since the streets still need to be plowed, emergency calls answered and a myriad of other everyday essential services delivered.

The Health Department also has taken the vaccine to Oak Park's most vulnerable populations, including residents of assisted and independent living facilities that house many lower income and minority senior citizens.

These congregate facilities not only have been hotspots for outbreaks of the highly-contagious virus, but have accounted for the vast majority of local deaths.

Many of Oak Park's homeless seniors also have been vaccinated by working with regional partner *Housing Forward* to reach this segment of our community.

In addition to directly vaccinating individuals who live and work here, the Oak Park Health Department also has broadened the availability of vaccination services by allocating thousands of vaccine doses through local health care partners including hospitals, pharmacies and health care providers.

But more needs to be done, a fact local public health officials are quick to acknowledge.

Officials say they remain optimistic that vaccine supplies will grow in the weeks and months ahead. But until then, vaccinating all Oak Parkers who need and want it will take time and residents are asked to remain patient.

For the latest information about Oak Park's vaccination efforts, visit [www.oak-park.us/vaccine](http://www.oak-park.us/vaccine). For all other information related to the Village's COVID-19 response, visit [www.oak-park.us/covid19](http://www.oak-park.us/covid19).



*Health Director Joseph Terry confers with healthcare workers at a Village vaccination clinic.*

## Eligible residents encouraged to complete vaccine pre-registration form

**A**n online vaccine pre-registration form is available for individuals who live or work here and may currently be eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccine as part of the state's multi-phased vaccine distribution plan. The pre-registration form is posted at [www.oak-park.us/vaccine](http://www.oak-park.us/vaccine). Filling out the pre-registration form does not schedule a vaccination, but collects information necessary to contact those eligible as specific vaccination opportunities arise. Vaccine pre-registration respondents will be contacted when an appointment is available for a vaccine clinic supported by the Health Department. Proof of eligibility, such as age, residency and/or employment in the Village, will be required at vaccine clinics managed by the Health Department. Partnerships also have been forged with local pharmacies and health care providers to broaden the availability of vaccination services across the community. Filling out Oak Park's vaccine pre-registration form does not preclude an eligible resident from receiving a vaccine dose from a provider other than the Oak Park Department of Public Health. As the vaccine supply grows throughout the region, residents are encouraged to take advantage of opportunities to be vaccinated by providers other than the Oak Park Health Department should they arise, with the understanding that any required second dose must come from the same provider. For more information about the Health Department's vaccine pre-registration form, email [covid19vaccine@oak-park.us](mailto:covid19vaccine@oak-park.us).

# 2020 By the Numbers: A look at municipal service delivery during COVID-19

## It was anything but business as usual in 2020 for the Village of Oak Park's 350 full-time municipal employees.

As the worldwide COVID-19 coronavirus reached Oak Park in mid-March of 2020, municipal employees from every department and every skillset pivoted to focus their wide range of formal education, experience and expertise to providing services unlike those typically required of local government workers.

Public works crews became experts in helping retailers designate safe social distances for their clientele and creating the materials they would need to help their customers comply.

Firefighter-paramedics answered every call for emergency medical services with the real possibility of encountering a highly-contagious virus on every ambulance run.

And public safety responsibilities expanded to include educating groups of maskless citizens in the parks and neighborhoods, and explaining tough state and local emergency regulations.

Police officers often were the face of government as they helped small business owners understand the changing rules and distributed more than 1,300 handmade masks to anyone in need.

The Health Department — one of only a handful of state-certified municipal public health departments in Illinois — took on the formidable role of tracking and reporting positive cases, and disseminating mountains of information on how to avoid getting infected, recognizing the symptoms and what actions to take if infection was suspected.

Health Department staff also distributed thousands of personal protection equipment (PPE) items, including to local businesses, social service agencies and healthcare providers.

By the end of 2020, the local health department would begin to take on the daunting task of distributing vaccines as well.

Those Village employees whose duties allowed worked from home, while others adopted split shifts and discrete work groups so that they could be quarantined should a positive case be identified among their ranks.

But the critical, yet often unseen, municipal services upon which citizens rely didn't stop. Oak Park's more than **100 miles of Village-owned streets, 500 alleys, nearly 20,000 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** still required attention.

The streets had to be plowed, water leaks fixed and building permits issued. Meanwhile, the revenues that support services fell as many typical fees and fines were temporarily reduced or waived to lessen the impact on Oak Park residents whose jobs had also been affected by the pandemic.

So how did the Village do in 2020 with maintaining critical municipal services in the midst of a worldwide pandemic? Here's snapshot of some of their activities from the year just ended...

## IMPROVING INFRASTRUCTURE



- 4,007** feet of new water mains installed
- 3,771** sidewalk squares replaced
- 3,144** potholes patched with 52.4 tons of asphalt
- 2,246** feet of new sewer main installed
- 1,463** lane miles of streets swept
- 677** street signs replaced
- 628** street lamps replaced
- 159** Sidewalk ramps upgraded to ADA standards
- 4.8** miles of streets micro-paved
- 2.35** miles of streets rebuilt and resurfaced



## SUSTAINING THE ENVIRONMENT

- \$340,055** in disposal fees saved by diverting 46 percent of all residential waste from landfills
- 224,000** gallons of storm water runoff diverted from sewers via 17 grant-funded residential flood control projects
- 10,797** tons of garbage hauled away
- 4,466** tons of household recyclables collected
- 3,163** tons of yard waste and food scraps composted, including from the 2,176 households participating in food scrap collection program
- 101** tons of household hazardous waste materials collected from 2,143 stops



## PROTECTING THE PUBLIC

- 56,272** Police responses, including calls, traffic stops, vacation property checks and alarm/security checks
- 7,218** fire and emergency medical service calls
- 5,599** trees trimmed, 327 removed and 128 planted
- 1,760** tons of salt spread during 16 separate snow events
- 1,460** property code violations reviewed
- 1,239** fire hydrants tested, 27 repaired, 13 replaced
- 418** buildings with fire protection systems inspected
- 145** health complaints investigated
- 129** public health inspections performed
- 33** private security cameras registered — 94 videos uploaded for Police review

## SERVING THE COMMUNITY



- \$1,879,563** in federal grants distributed to help low- and moderate-income residents and the homeless
- \$584,617** allocated to support affordable housing programs
- 158,817** mobile parking meter transactions processed
- 58,304** overnight parking passes processed online
- 43,154** service requests answered by the Public Works Department
- 3,987** local ordinance and parking citations administratively adjudicated at Village Hall
- 2,147** animals licensed
- 1,800** hours contributed by 148 volunteers on 21 advisory boards, committees and commissions
- 1,412** requests processed under the Illinois Freedom of Information Act — 747 for Police reports and related documents
- 1,227** community relations issues addressed, including tenant/landlord disputes and neighbor conflicts
- 407** rental dwelling licenses issued
- 372** graffiti hits removed
- 54** Sewer Backup Prevention Grants approved for \$181,178
- 42** meetings of the Village Board and its committees — more than 40 issues of public policy deliberated
- 30** animals rescued



## BUILDING THE COMMUNITY

- \$8,600,000** in sales and use taxes generated — \$6,400,000 by local businesses
- \$1,837,603** in building permit fees collected
- 5,001** construction, commercial and residential property inspections performed
- 4,349** zoning-related building permits reviewed
- 3,586** building permit applications submitted — 100% online
- 1,797** historic preservation property renovation permits reviewed
- 992** business licenses issued, including for 63 new businesses
- 78** liquor licenses issued, including 4 new



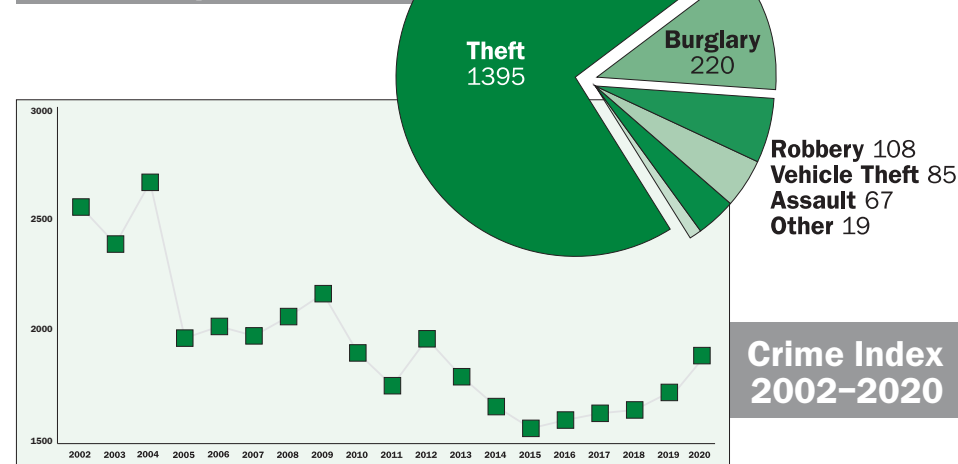
## COMMUNICATING INFORMATION

- 1,962,258** website page views — 57.6% on a mobile device
- 154,047** minutes of VOP-TV programming on Village YouTube channel and other social media platforms
- 25,047** online views of Village Board and citizen commission meetings — 65% on a mobile device
- 17,963** Village Facebook followers
- 10,280** Village Twitter feed followers
- 5,579** Village Instagram followers
- 4,836** enews list serve subscribers

## Police release 2020 crime statistics

Oak Park Police investigated 166 more crimes in 2020 than in 2019, pushing the overall crime rate up about 10 percent, according to data compiled by the Police Department for the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting Program that studies patterns and trends over time. The biggest increase came in thefts, which historically is the single largest category of crime reported in Oak Park. But the number of aggravated assault and battery cases was up as well, as police investigated 67 incidents in 2020 compared to 49 in 2019. The deaths of a prominent local couple were the only homicides reported in 2020. Police continue to vigorously investigate the homicides with the help of regional, state and federal agencies. Oak Park Police investigated 1,894 crimes in 2020, compared to 1,728 in 2019. Burglaries and thefts, property crimes that historically represent the majority of lawbreaking in the Village, remained the biggest categories at more than 85 percent of all crimes committed in the community in 2020. Theft in 2020 included 364 reports of possible identity theft related to false claims filed for unemployment insurance. One hundred eight robberies and 67 assault/battery reports were investigated in 2020, as compared to 96 robberies and 49 assault/battery cases in 2019. These crimes, more than most, tend to reflect regional challenges, rather than just local ones, according to Police. Theft was up in 2020 — 1,395 reports compared to 1,253 in 2019 — but burglaries were down — 220 in 2020 compared to 244 in 2019. Locking garage doors and keeping a watchful eye on personal belongings are among the best deterrents to these crimes of opportunity, Police say. Arrests were down overall in 2020, according to the official report, but up significantly for robberies — 37 in 2020 compared to 13 in 2019. Police investigated 3,575 traffic-related incidents in 2020, including 1,490 accidents, compared to 5,438 incidents involving 2,120 accidents in 2019. Juvenile crime was down significantly in 2020, according to the report. Thirty-two crimes involving juveniles were investigated in 2020, compared to 67 in 2019. For more information on the Oak Park Police Department, visit [www.oak-park.us/police](http://www.oak-park.us/police).

### Crimes Reported 2020



## Energy efficiency rehab grants available

Grants of up to \$10,000 each in financial assistance are available to income-eligible residents for home improvements that help reduce energy consumption. The grants are intended to help lower-income residents pay for installing insulation, energy-efficient lighting, water heaters, high-efficiency showerheads and faucets, air leak sealing, thermostats and solar panels. Installation of upgraded heating, venting and air conditioning systems also is eligible. The grants are funded by the Village's Sustainability Fund, which includes a share of waste hauling fees, electricity aggregation monies and the mandatory single-use bag fee enacted in 2018 to encourage adoption of reusable bags. For more information on this new grant program including how to apply, call 708.358.5410.

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.oprfs.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)

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

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

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

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

## Vaccination critical to controlling COVID-19

Vaccines to prevent COVID-19 are perhaps the best hope for ending the pandemic. While vaccines are being developed as quickly as possible, routine processes and procedures remain in place to ensure that any vaccine that is approved for use is safe. Among the many reasons to get vaccinated when the opportunity arises are the following facts from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

### Vaccination will help keep you from getting COVID-19... All COVID-19 vaccines currently available have shown to be very effective at preventing the highly contagious virus. Early trial data suggest getting vaccinated also may help prevent serious illness even if you get COVID-19.

**Vaccination helps build protection...** Vaccines must be shown safe and effective before being authorized or approved for use. The risk of severe illness and death from COVID-19 far outweighs any risks of vaccination. COVID-19 vaccination will help create an immune system response without you having to experience sickness.

**Vaccination is important to stopping the pandemic...** Wearing masks and social distancing help reduce the chance of being exposed to the virus or spreading it to others, but are not enough. Vaccines will work with your immune system so it will be ready to fight the virus if you are exposed. The combination of getting vaccinated and following recommendations to protect yourself and others offers the best protection from COVID-19.

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

## Village Hall to host early voting

Suburban Cook County voters can cast an early ballot for the April 6, 2021 Consolidated Municipal Election from March 22 through April 5 at Village Hall, 123 Madison St. Village Hall hours for early voting will be as follows:

- Monday – Saturday, March 22 – March 27: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Sunday, March 28: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Monday – Friday, March 29 – April 2: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Saturday, April 3: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Sunday, April 4: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Monday, April 5: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**Voter registration...** Residents can register to vote in local, state and federal elections at Oak Park Village Hall, 123 Madison St., by appointment. To schedule an appointment, email [clerk@oak-park.us](mailto:clerk@oak-park.us) or call 708.358.5672 or 708.358.5673. Residents who have an Illinois driver's license or state ID may also register online at [www.elections.il.gov](http://www.elections.il.gov).

**More information...** For more information on the April 6, 2021 Consolidated Election, including polling sites by address, visit [www.cookcountyclerk.com/elections](http://www.cookcountyclerk.com/elections).



Nurses ready syringes for vaccinations at a Village-run clinic.

## Oak Park Avenue upgrades launch construction season

The 2021 construction season gets underway in March with a major improvement project along Oak Park Avenue, the latest in a series of much-needed upgrades to main thoroughfares in the community. The Village received federal funding to resurface the vital north/south roadway from North Avenue to Roosevelt Road. The last time the roadway was resurfaced was in 2004/2005. The project also includes replacing and rehabilitating underground water and sewer mains, some of which are more than 100 years old. The water and sewer infrastructure work is expected to begin in March, with street resurfacing scheduled to start in June. All work is expected to wrap up in November. The project also includes pedestrian ramp improvements to meet federal ADA standards and the installation of protected pedestrian crossings and beacons at select locations for added safety. No work is scheduled between Pleasant and Ontario streets this year, giving businesses in the Hemingway District a break following the major disruption caused by last year's Lake Street project. Residents are encouraged to visit the project's dedicated website at [www.OPAveAnew.com](http://www.OPAveAnew.com) for construction details and schedules. The website also offers an option to sign up for email updates.

**Miscellaneous construction updates...** While the Oak Park Avenue improvement project will attract much attention this construction season, a number of other smaller projects will take place throughout the Village. Visit [www.oak-park.us/construction](http://www.oak-park.us/construction) for regular updates about various construction projects around Oak Park. The website also includes an interactive map of all construction projects planned for 2021. For more detailed information about specific projects, call 708.358.5700 or email [publicworks@oak-park.us](mailto:publicworks@oak-park.us).





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

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

## Volunteers vital to local vaccination efforts

From screening patients at vaccination clinic check-ins and monitoring them in the post-vaccination waiting area to actually administering vaccine doses, volunteers are playing critical roles at COVID-19 vaccine clinics hosted by the Oak Park Department of Public Health.



Volunteer Dr. Jerry Niederman administers vaccine at a Village clinic.

The Health Department typically schedules scores of appointments per hour when it hosts drive-through vaccine clinics. This pace wouldn't be possible without the contributions of the volunteers who lend their time and talent to supplement the many municipal employees who set up and manage the events.

About 100 volunteers have taken part in these Health Department vaccine clinics, which are held about once per week since early January, the frequency driven by the vaccine supply from the state.

Volunteers also have filled critical roles in walk-in clinics for mass vaccinations of educators where as many as 600 vaccine doses have been administered in a matter of a few hours.

These volunteers come from all walks of Oak Park life but got involved by answering the call to sign up for the Village's Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) and Community Emergency Response Team (CERT).

Volunteer medical doctors and nurses handle the sensitive job of administering vaccine doses.

But a medical background is not required to assist with the highly orchestrated check-in and check-out processes that are critical to the smooth operation of each vaccine clinic.

The need for clinic volunteers has never been greater or the roles they play more important. That's why the Village currently is seeking to increase the cadre of volunteers for its Medical Reserve Corps and Community Emergency Response Team.

In addition to assisting with ongoing COVID-19 vaccination efforts, volunteers may be called on to assist with logistical planning, records keeping, health awareness campaigns, staffing first-aid stations, providing emergency care and distributing medication during future emergency situations.

For an online volunteer application and more information about the Village's Medical Reserve Corps and Community Emergency Response Team, visit [www.oak-park.us/emergencypreparedness](http://www.oak-park.us/emergencypreparedness).

## 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 daily testing, official guidelines 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).

**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 respond to COVID-19 is posted online on the Village website at [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 is available at [www.oak-park.us/vaccine](http://www.oak-park.us/vaccine).

**Via email...**Oak Park residents with specific questions about the COVID-19 vaccine can email [covid19vaccine@oak-park.us](mailto:covid19vaccine@oak-park.us).