



Your Voice Counts

City of Oak Park administration makes every effort to engage residents and local business owners in live discussions related to opportunities for improving community sustainability. This month, the focus is economic development. Questions? Contact Emily Doerr, director of Community & Economic Development, at (248) 691-7404 or at edoerr@ci.oak-park.mi.us.

Town Hall Meeting

Tavern Licensing (Beer & Wine Only)
 Wednesday, April 3, 2013, 7 PM
 Oak Park Community Center
 Discussion: How might the expansion of restaurant menus impact our community?

Business Roundtable

Tuesday, April 9, 2013, 9 AM
 Oak Park Community Center
 Discussion: Monthly summit for local business owners to share ideas and best practices.

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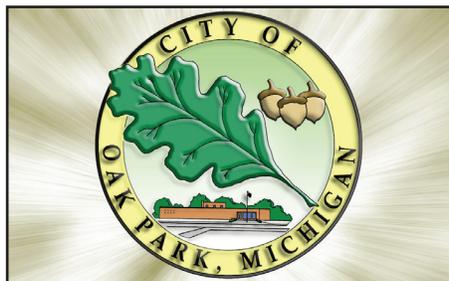


Public Safety: A Cut Above

What sets our Oak Park men and women in blue apart from other law enforcement? First, they have above-average skills. (All officers must complete between 24 - 32 combined weeks of training at, both, police and fire academies.) Second, they have exceptional credentials. (Each of them is certified in law enforcement, firefighting and emergency medical services.) And, third, they may suddenly change uniforms depending on the job at hand... although it probably will not be in a phone booth.

“One of the significant differences between a public service officer and a police officer is that one of our officers does the work of three professionals, which represents an exceptional cost savings for our taxpayers,” Oak Park Public Safety Chief Steve Cooper said. “What many people don’t know is that patrolling officers always carry a duffle bag containing their fire gear in case they need to

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Manager's Monthly Bulletin

Erik Tungate

It comes as no surprise that our City has experienced extreme financial stress over the last several years. Like many of our neighboring communities, we have been impacted significantly by taxable value decreases, State revenue sharing reductions, and

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Students Plant Roots

Arbor Day 2013

This spring, students from John F. Kennedy Elementary School in Oak Park will partner with City of Oak Park employees from the Department of Public Works (DPW), members of the Oak Park Recycling Commission and resident volunteers to help cele-

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SAFETY

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switch roles.”

According to Chief Cooper, several other communities have contacted the City of Oak Park over the years to request help in developing the Public Safety model.



Archived photo

Oak Park was one of the first communities in the state of Michigan to initiate a Public Safety Department in 1954. The department operates within an efficient and complex model that requires constant communication between officers and collaboration with neighboring communities. In the event of a major fire or medical disaster, the model ensures adequate public safety coverage to manage the event, maintain road patrol and supervise the jail. Oak Park Public Safety can summon and share temporary jurisdiction with police and fire departments from other communities if needed, such as Berkley, Huntington Woods and Beverly Hills, as part of the Mutual Aid Program.

“People often misunderstand the role of public safety by simply referring to us as ‘police officers’.” Chief Cooper added. “We can handle the slight as long as we know that residents feel confident that they are safe and will be well taken care of in the event of an emergency.”

What sets our Public Safety officers apart? They are actually more like super heroes than most people know.

ROOTS

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brate Arbor Day. JFK Students will participate in this annual event by helping to plant a tree at Best Park which is located adjacent to the school property. It is customary for students to give the tree a name during the Arbor Day ceremony. In addition to the tree planting, students will have follow-up visits during the season to ensure that the tree is receiving water and proper care.

Susan Christin, a parent volunteer at JFK, helped to organize the event this year along with JFK Principal Derek Adams and several members of the Oak Park Recycling Commission.

“In years past, students from Oak Park schools have really enjoyed participating in these events,” commented Kevin Yee, DPW director. “It’s a great learning experience for the students. Years from now, when former students revisit the area, they can say to their children, ‘I planted that tree.’”

Best Park is located on the north side of Northfield Street

Welcome New Officer

Officer Donald Hoffman, 26, is a former U.S. Marine, who was primarily stationed in North Carolina. Officer Hoffman officially began his watch in March 2013. He currently resides in Canton with wife, Chelsey. A graduate from Schoolcraft College, he comes to Oak Park with an Associate degree in Fire Science.



Officer Hoffman(left) with Chief Cooper

“Officer Hoffman is an excellent addition to the public safety team,” Oak Park Public Safety Chief Steve Cooper commented. “In addition to an impressive performance on the qualifying exams, he came to Oak Park having already achieved police and fire certifications.” Prior to his hiring, Officer Hoffman successfully completed extensive oral board and written exams, as well as physical, psychological and drug screen tests.

“I’ve always wanted to be a police officer since I was a kid,” Officer Hoffman said. “Once I joined the fire academy, firefighting then also became a passion for me. I was attracted to Oak Park because I now have the opportunity to do both.”



Archived photo

just west of Roanoke Street in Oak Park, MI. The event scheduled to take place April 26th from 10am to 11am. In the event of inclement weather, the event will be postponed until May 3rd. The public is encouraged to attend this special event.

Guest Feature: Oak Park Career Center

Michigan Works!

The Oak Park Career Center has been providing job search training for residents and serving as a talent recruitment resource for employers for more than 40 years. Originally located in the local high school and funded by the Oak Park School District, the Career Center relocated to its current site on Parklawn in 1991. Today, the Career Center is supported by Oakland County Workforce Development and operates as a Michigan Works! program site offering a variety of free services designed to prepare unemployed workers for participation in the labor force.

Job Seeker Programs:

- Computers, Internet, Fax, Copiers, and Phones for job search
- Unemployment Insurance Agency Work registration
- Career Counseling and website assistance
- Workshops for resumes, interview success
- Help employers find you on www.mitalent.org
- Training – Enhance your job skills

Employer Programs:

- Talent Recruitment and Outreach
- Job Fairs & Group Interviews at their Career Center
- On-The-Job Training
- Tax Credits for New Hires
- Labor Market Information
- Broadcasting of Jobs on Social Media Networks



Sherry Kless, Michigan Works! Program Coordinator, and Katherine T. Conner, Oak Park resident

Jobs and career resources posted on social media sites:

- “Like Us” on Facebook:
Michigan Works Oak Park Career Center
- Follow on Twitter: MI_WorksOakPark
- Join LinkedIn group: Oak Park Career Center

Michigan Works!

Oak Park Career Center

22180 Parklawn

Oak Park, MI 48237

www.oakparkcareercenter.org

Ph: (248) 691-8437 Fax: (248) 545-0415



Operation: Take Back Drug Recycling Program

Finally, here's your chance to clean out the medicine cabinet.... In partnership with the Drug Enforcement Agency, Oak Park Public Safety hosts “Operation Take Back,” a one-day program that invites residents to recycle prescription drugs that are no longer needed, but may still be in the home. On Saturday, April 27, 2013 from 10 AM to 2 PM, residents can deliver any unconsumed, non-liquid medications to the Oak Park Public Safety building located next to City Hall at 13600 Oak Park Boulevard. Questions? Contact Officer Brenna Rouleau at (248) 691-7504 or at brouleau@ci.oak-park.mi.us.



Coming Soon: Community Clean Up Day

May 5, 2013, 8am - Noon

Let's work together to make our community shine! Volunteer to help complete a community project or commit to sprucing up your own yard or neighborhood that day. Your neighbors will appreciate whatever you can contribute!

Interested in joining a volunteer team or have a suggestion for a project area? Contact Rocco Fortura by April 18th at (248) 691-7495 or via e-mail rfortura@ci.oak-park.mi.us.

MANAGER
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rising legacy costs.

The reality for us is that we are just now starting to come out of a five-year budget cycle that has been nothing short of devastating considering the fact that we receive most of our revenues from property taxes and taxable values have fallen considerably.

The question is: What are we now doing to move the City forward from a reactive to a proactive state of affairs?

We have successfully instituted a pro-growth strategy that includes more investment in economic development and local infrastructure, including a new city hall/public safety building that is currently under budget, and better roads, which includes the resurfacing of Lincoln and the intersection at 10 Mile and Coolidge. We are also in discussions to pursue a greenway initiative connecting our amazing city parks.

The economic development aspect of our pro-growth strategy includes allowing incentives for new and existing businesses that want to do business here. While it is only a small part of becoming more attractive to businesses, Tavern (beer and wine only) licenses represent a small shift towards luring more investment into our commercial districts.

The truth is that no one is under the impression that a handful of new restaurants with a Tavern license can change the entirety of our economic picture; although it is important

to note the significant shift in perception that such a move represents. It is also important to understand that even one restaurant can get the momentum going and the ball rolling. Slow's BBQ in the Corktown neighborhood of Detroit is the best example I have ever seen.

The administration of the City of Oak Park reflects the views of City Council and the residents of our great City. It is not our role to take a position on legislation or to ask you to show support in any way. That said, if Tavern licenses are allowed in the City of Oak Park, we maintain the stance that we will be able to attract and retain more restaurants.

We are currently hosting town hall meetings to get input from our residents to determine if this is something worth pursuing and, if so, what the requirements should be to ensure that we are including standards sufficient to meet the needs of our residents.

The next Town Hall is on Wednesday, April 3rd at 7pm in the Oak Park Community Center. Please come and be heard. I look forward to seeing you then!

Respectfully,



Erik Tungate
City Manager



community happenings

Monday, April 1

City Council Mtg.

Council convenes at City Hall in the council chambers. Regularly scheduled meetings begin at 7pm. Find info via the City web site:
ci.oak-park.mi.us/

Wednesday, April 3

Town Hall Meeting

This second Town Hall Meeting regarding Tavern (beer and wine only) Licensing is will be held at the Oak park Community Center in Room A from 7-9pm. All Oak Park residents are welcome to attend.

Thursday, April 4

Yard Waste & Brush Pick-Up Begins

Wednesday, April 10

Friends of the Library Mtg.

Join fellow residents in an effort to support, sponsor, plan fun and educational programs, as well as coordinate annual book sales. Community Center Meeting Room #5 at 7pm

Monday, April 15

City Council Mtg.

Council convenes at City Hall in the council chambers. Regularly scheduled meetings begin at 7pm. Find info via the City web site:

ci.oak-park.mi.us/

Thursday, April 18

Baseball/Softball Deadline

Today is the last day to sign up your youngster ages 5-16 to play in age appropriate leagues this Spring/Summer.
More info: 248-691-7555

Wednesday, April 24

Arts & Cultural Comm.

Join fellow residents in an effort to study & recommend plans for City-wide cultural programs. Community Center Meeting Room #3 at 7:30pm

Friday, April 26

Arbor Day

Saturday, April 27

Operation: Take Back Day

Residents may recycle prescription drugs that are no longer needed, but may still be in their home. Drugs may be taken to Public Safety from 10am-2pm. See page 3 of this issue for more information.

More info: 248-691-7504

Sunday, May 5

Community Clean Up Day

Residents are invited to join forces with City employees to help clean up various parts of Oak Park, or commit to sprucing up their own yard. See page 3 of this issue for more information.

More info: 248-691-7495