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VISION STATEMENT

The Village of Oak Park is a highly desirable place to live and visit because of our people, our shared values, our culture and our location.

We have a strong sense of responsibility to embrace our historic past and support our thriving present as a diverse, welcoming, inclusive and integrated community.

Oak Park is a leader in transformational thought and action committed to making brave decisions that are racially and environmentally just and create a safe, equitable, affordable and vibrant future.

VILLAGE BOARD CORE VALUES & GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- We are Community-Centered in Our Thinking
- We are Fiscally Responsible with Our Public Resources
- We Build Trust through Respectful Dialogue and Board Actions
- We are Transparent and Accountable to the Community
- We Engage and Collaborate with the Community and Partners
- We are Focused on Equity, Innovation and Sustainability
- We Recognize Our Changing Demographics and Adjust to Meet Evolving Needs and Desires

1 Community Affordability

Priority 1: Remove Economic Barriers

Priority 2: Limit the Tax Levy per a [Financial Strategic Plan](#) Policy

Priority 3: Pursue Governmental Partnerships

2 Community Health & Safety

Priority 1: Reduce Crime

~~**Priority 2:** Explore Alternatives for Youth Engagement~~ (move under Priority 1)

~~**Priority 2:** Implement BerryDunn Report Recommendations~~ [Reimagine Community Safety](#)

~~**Priority 4:** Provide for the Safe Use and Enjoyment of Private and Public Property~~ (move under Priority 1)

~~**Priority 5**~~ **3** Provide for Safe Mobility

~~**Priority 6**~~ **4:** Ensure Healthy Work Environments for Village Workers

Priority 5: [Strengthen Oak Park's Public Health Network to Improve Current and Future Health Outcomes](#) (create new focus on Public Health)

Priority 6: Support for Unhoused Residents (no new title, moved from "Neighborhoods" goal)

3 Racial Equity

Priority 1: Ensure Equitable Access to Government Services and Contracts

Priority 2: Assess and Address Historical Lack of Equity

Priority 3: Support Integration and Diverse Community Entry Points

Priority 4: Enhance Cultural Competency [Sense of Belonging](#)

4 Vibrant, Diverse, Connected Neighborhoods

Priority 1: Support Sustainable Advancement of Affordable Housing

Priority 2: Support Strategies Related to Parking, [Mobility and Sustainable Transportation](#)

Priority 3: Create Opportunities for Neighborhood & Community Engagement

~~**Priority 4:** Infrastructure that Promotes Sustainable Transportation~~

~~**Priority 5**~~ **4:** Emphasis on Relationship Between Neighborhoods and Business Districts [through Infrastructure and Support](#)

~~**Priority 6**~~ **5:** Rapid Response Support for Unhoused Residents (move to Community Health/Safety, Priority 6)

5 Sustainability & Resiliency

Priority 1: Implement, Report and Educate on the Climate Action Plan

Priority 2: Reporting on Plan Progress

Priority 3: Resident Engagement and Education

Priority 4 2: Maintain Viable Sustainability Fund

6 Economic Vitality

Priority 1: Adopt and Implement Update the Village's Formal Economic Vitality Strategy

Priority 2: Support New and Existing Small Businesses and Districts

Priority 3: Implement Economic Development Strategies in Commercial Corridors

7 Organizational Effectiveness

Priority 1: Create an environment of innovation and efficiency that supports effective core services.

Priority 2: Foster community/civic engagement to enhance service delivery and Village governance

Priority 3: Maintain high quality core services across the Village

Community Affordability

Priority 1: Remove Economic Barriers

- a. Continue to review existing standards for residential assistance programs and identify opportunities to remove potential barriers in order increase participation
- b. Explore opportunities for senior-focused support programs in collaboration with community partners (i.e. engage seniors in partnership with the Township to assist seniors regarding tax breaks, connection to other services such as repair programs, snow shoveling).

Community Affordability

Priority 2: Limit the Tax Levy per a Finance Policy

Strategic Plan

- a. As part of the long-term financial plan, include a comprehensive review of Village fees including the development of low and moderate-income standards for implementation of progressive fees and rates.
- b. As part of the long-term financial plan, conduct a review of village revenue sources and identify potential alternate sources that could support Village strategic priorities

Community Affordability

Priority 3: Pursue Governmental Partnerships

- a. Create an interagency equity consortium on affordability with current equity leads of the other taxing bodies to create awareness around various issues.
- b. Seek opportunities to collaborate with other Oak Park taxing bodies to alleviate the property tax burden (e.g. coordination of capital improvement planning across all Oak Park taxing bodies, joint opportunities to grow the tax base, etc.).
- c. Explore partnerships with other communities regarding the expansion of the Village's emergency dispatch (West Suburban Consolidated Dispatch Center) to ensure Oak Park's delivery of emergency services in the most cost-effective manner.

COMMUNITY HEALTH & SAFETY

Priority 1: Reduce Crime

- a. Start a Citizen Police Academy to educate the community on police procedures, promote community partnership with law enforcement and potentially establish volunteer program with the graduates.
- b. Develop and implement a strategy for data-informed policing to prevent and reduce crime and allocate resources effectively.
- c. Establish a Youth Diversion & Restorative Program within the Office of Adjudication
- d. Evaluate the continued expansion of the ECHO program, including the addition of a second phase that includes a social service co-response

COMMUNITY HEALTH & SAFETY

Priority ~~3~~ **2: Implement BerryDunn Report**

Recommendations Reimagine

Community Safety

- a. Update and evaluate all policies in an effort to ensure the Department is operating constitutionally based on vetted best practices to guard against the potential for any predatory policies.
- b. Create specific protocols for advancing diversity, equity and inclusion in the Police and the Fire Departments.
- c. Develop a communication and engagement strategy to strengthen the Police and Fire Department's connection with the community.
- d. Implement the Pivot Police Oversight Recommendations pursuant to the adopted plan.

COMMUNITY HEALTH & SAFETY

Priority 3: Provide for Safe Mobility

- a. Implement the Village's adopted Vision Zero in accordance with the Village approved Capital Improvement Program in 2026 and 2027.

COMMUNITY HEALTH & SAFETY

Priority 4: Ensure Healthy Work Environments for Village Workers

- a. Advance the Oak Park Municipal Campus initiative by progressing through the full design phase and preparing for construction of the new Village Police Station beginning in 2027.
- b. Complete the Fire Station II Space Needs Analysis and identify a recommended implementation pathway based on operational requirements, facility conditions, and long-term service delivery goals.
- c. Incorporate recommendations for additional facility improvements and project priorities into future Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and annual budget documents, with implementation beginning in 2026.
- d. Implement the Village's employee wellness strategic plan.

COMMUNITY HEALTH & SAFETY

Priority 5: Strengthen Oak Park's Public Health Network to Improve Current and Future Health Outcomes

- a. Foster strong partnerships with community organizations to collaboratively advance the health priorities using an equity lens for those needs identified in the IPLAN
- b. Collaborate with local schools and organizations to promote a vaccine educational campaign
- c. Reestablish regular meetings with community partners on emergency preparedness and response planning
- d. Establish a referral system to connect residents with the services needed
- e. Maintain a public dashboard of key health metrics
- f. Maintain a public dashboard of searchable food inspections

COMMUNITY HEALTH & SAFETY

Priority 6: Support Unhoused Residents

- a. Work with local, county, and state partners to support a sustainable funding model for the emergency shelter.

- b. Evaluate options for the addition of a permanent bathroom in downtown Oak Park.

RACIAL EQUITY

Priority 1: Ensure Equitable Access to Government Services and Contracts

- a. Complete and implement the Racial Equity Action Strategic Plan.
- b. Audit policies, procedures and practices from a racial equity lens regarding ADA and aging in community accessibility.
- c. Finalize and implement a Welcoming City Action Plan in collaboration with our governmental partners
- d. Assess Village procurement standards to ensure accessibility and opportunities for woman and minority and disadvantaged-owned businesses
- e. Complete implementation of the Village's Language Access Plan

RACIAL EQUITY

Priority 2: Assess and Address Historical Lack of Equity

- a. Evaluate Village historic commitment to protecting human rights (i.e. current Human Rights Ordinance, associated policies and practices and associated Community Relations division programming).
- b. Expand the Village's fair housing enforcement tools and supports to support additional violation reporting by residents and greater compliance by housing providers
- c. Evaluate the Village's home ownership program for alignment with the strategic vision for housing and its goals for addressing racial/ethnic disparities in home ownership

RACIAL EQUITY

Priority 3: Support Integration and Diverse Community Entry Points*

- a. Implement a refreshed affirmative marketing program for the Village that reflects feedback from the Strategic Vision for Housing Study and the Racial Equity Assessment

**See also the priorities & strategic initiatives listed in Community Affordability & Racial Equity*

RACIAL EQUITY

Priority 4: Enhance Cultural Belonging

- a. Develop DEI educational resource bank on the Village website (i.e. cultural holiday guides, educational videos, book references) (based on CROP EB02).
- b. Institute the Reinitiation of a Reenvisioned Dinner and Dialogue Program.

VIBRANT, DIVERSE, CONNECTED NEIGHBORHOODS

Priority 1: Support Sustainable Advancement of Affordable Housing

- a. Re-evaluate single-family zoning land uses relative to “Missing Middle” housing opportunities and report results to the Village Board with recommended actions
- b. Propose changes to the Village’s Inclusionary Housing Ordinance that incorporate the zoning code changes to support added housing supply
- c. Evaluate and propose changes in the Vacant Building’s Ordinance and Neighborhood Walk Program to proactively address property issues and align staffing resources with our greatest residential property maintenance needs
- d. Explore the benefits and drawbacks of expanding rental property inspections to include buildings with three and fewer units.
- e. Review and develop financial incentives to support the development of “missing middle” housing that includes an affordable housing component.

VIBRANT, DIVERSE, CONNECTED NEIGHBORHOODS

Priority 2: Support Strategies Related to Parking, Mobility **and Sustainable Transportation**

- a. Evaluate the Village’s High-Volume Business Validation Parking Program to determine if program eligibility criteria need to be adjusted to expand the number of qualifying businesses thus encouraging additional utilization of parking garages in an effort to lessen parking pressures for neighborhoods in and around the Hemingway, DTOP and Pleasant business districts.

- b. Implement the Village’s adopted 2025 Updated Bike Plan in accordance with the approved Capital Improvement Plan for 2026 and 2027

- c. Evaluate impacts on parking requirements, demand and supply relative to residential and commercial development due to the Parking over People Act and Missing Middle Housing Initiatives.

VIBRANT, DIVERSE, CONNECTED NEIGHBORHOODS

Priority 3: Create Opportunities for Neighborhood & Community Engagement

- a. Launch the Neighborhood Registry program to support neighborhood identity, relationship-building, and consistent communication between residents and the Village
- b. Explore opportunities to expand programming at neighborhood block parties and resident engagement in neighborhood, community, and Village-sponsored special events.
- c. Review the Village's offerings for condominiums and the benefits of re-establishing the "Condo Network" to support residents who live in condominiums
- d. Begin Envision Oak Park Comprehensive Plan update process. Engage the public on key components of the current plan. Evaluate the overall completion and ongoing projects within the document

VIBRANT, DIVERSE, CONNECTED NEIGHBORHOODS

Priority ~~5~~ 4: **Emphasis on Enhance**

Relationship Between

Neighborhoods and Business

Districts through Infrastructure and

Support

a. Continue to explore the role that special events play in the community including impact to neighborhood relationships, economic vitality, and overall community experience. Recommend special event policies related to the Board's vision, values and goals of community affordability, community health and safety, racial equity, vibrant, diverse and connected neighborhoods, sustainability & resiliency and economic vitality.

b. Complete design and begin construction of the first phase of the Percy Julian Streetscape along Chicago Ave

c. Complete the Oak Park Avenue Streetscape Project

d. Conduct a comprehensive review of the Village's operational policies and practices regarding special events

SUSTAINABILITY & RESILIENCY

Priority 1: Implement, Report and Educate on the Climate Action Plan

a. Update and implement the Village's purchasing policy as a sustainable procurement policy for all Village operating departments, emphasizing certified socially and environmentally responsible materials and equipment with the goal of providing contract opportunities to local residents and disadvantages business enterprises (Based on CROP ED01, GJ04, SD03)

b. Work with partners to identify options for expanding community solar opportunities for Oak Park and implement a campaign to increase residential and business enrollment in high-quality Community Solar programs that provide guaranteed savings (RE01, RE03, RE04)

c. Evaluate the adoption of the energy stretch code for major building renovations and public facilities that requires enhanced building system performance, electrification and readiness for on-site solar energy and electric vehicle charging (based on CROP EE01).

d Implement the Oak Park Energy Navigator program and investigate the feasibility of establishing a bulk-purchase discount program for home electrification (based on CROP BD05)

e.Conduct a feasibility assessment of district heat/geothermal energy networks to replace gas heat at various scales (based on CROP BD08)

f.Update the Plan Development process to enhance compensating benefits to include additional building energy and water efficiency, waste reduction, and climate resiliency features based on CROP EE02).

g.Work with and develop programs for large building owners to increase energy efficiency and electrification including increasing compliance with the benchmarking ordinance, evaluating building performance standards, evaluating the adoption of the Illinois Finance Authority's C-PACE ordinance, and creating incentive and technical assistance programs (based on CROP BD04, EE02, EN01, EN02)

h.Pursue opportunities to increase the percentage of renewable energy supplied to Village facilities through onsite solar and community solar (CROP commitment #3 Energy Needs of Village

Facilities Goal).

- i. Assess telecommuting work policies (based on CROP VT07).
- j. Conduct public outreach to promote walking, biking, and transit use as well as to provide information and technical assistance to transition personal vehicles to electric vehicles (VT10, DP03).
- k. Complete the Green Infrastructure and Enhanced Management plan. Develop policies and programs recommended in the plan to reach the goal of 30% green infrastructure and enhanced management (based on CROP GD04, EP02, TC01, NN02, CA02, CA03, CA04, GI02, GI03, DR03, CP02, CP03, DR02, DR03).
- l. Advance equity in climate resilience by working with community partners to conduct a feasibility assessment for resilient climate hubs in high vulnerability areas (based on CROP AR05)
- m. Continue to work with businesses to increase sustainable practices and connect businesses to resources for furthering sustainability practices through the partnership with the University of Illinois' EnergySense program. Develop a program to recognize businesses for their sustainability efforts (SB01, SB04).
- n. Update CROP plan metrics dashboard quarterly and update the Greenhouse Gas inventory and forecasts every two years (MU01).
- o. Launch a local arts and social media initiative to communicate climate science and inspire action across community groups (CROP action AC02).

SUSTAINABILITY & RESILIENCY

Priority 4 **2**: Maintain Viable Sustainability Fund

- a. Identify, review, and seek Board direction on revenue options to structurally fund the Climate Ready actions

ECONOMIC VITALITY

Priority 1: ~~Update Adopt and Implement~~ the Village's Formal Economic Vitality Strategy

- a. Implement the Camoin Report and the comprehensive economic vitality plan including economic and business development strategy.
- b. Fully operationalize the new Office of Economic Vitality
- c. Create a policy on real estate acquisition, assembly, and disposition activities, aligned with Village priorities for development and redevelopment to enhance the Village's sales tax revenue, property tax revenue, and overall tax base.
- d. Retain, grow and attract business including small, women, veteran's and minority-owned enterprises, and entrepreneurs choosing to invest in Oak Park.
- e. Encourage and support redevelopment and real estate and business investments in priority areas and underutilized sites within the Village, consistent with Village growth priorities.
- f. Attract and foster specific industries to have growth potential in Oak Park including any business sectors and/or clusters, and existing or emerging within the region.
- g. Advance strategic and coordinated marketing and community assets to expand tourism, support growth of local businesses, and assist with attracting new investments and residents.
- h. Strategically encourage and grow the nighttime economy of Oak

Park.

- i. Strengthen economic vitality operations through enhanced intergovernmental and community collaboration, and via public-private partnerships where appropriate and beneficial.
- j. Establish a system to collect and monitor data on economic and market conditions to support agility of Economic Vitality operations
- k. Grow the organizational capacity and vibrancy of neighborhood business districts as a foundational element of growing the economic vitality of the Village.
- l. Identify and leverage diversity of funding mechanisms to successfully advance the Economic Vitality Plan
- m. Monitor and report on performance of the updated plan and strategies. Evaluate the Lakota Groups's Roosevelt Road Corridor Plan and Implement the corridor plan with the Village Board objectives.
- n. Continue to partner with the City of Chicago on the development and implementation of the North Avenue Streetscape Plan and explore economic development opportunities along the corridor.
- o. Evaluate relevant land-use standards to ensure consistency with implementation expectations of the updated Economic vitality and housing strategies.

ECONOMIC VITALITY

Priority 2: Support New and Existing Small Business and Districts

- a. Create systemic customer relations management (CRM) system for business attraction contacts and business retention visits.
- b. Create Strategies to reduce retail vacancies under 3.0%.
- c. Utilize the Costar database service to establish an accurate and complete first floor vacancy list and ensure that this vacancy information is made available to prospective brokers and clients through the Economic Vitality section of the Village's website and other available communication means.
- d. Work with representative brokers/property owners to identify and direct potential retail/commercial clients to consider available vacant spaces.
- e. Implement the Camoin Economic Vitality study and the identified categories where Oak Park has the greatest loss in the community and focus, where possible, efforts attracting retail business that help to address the identified loss.
- f. Work with business, and non-profit organizations and established business districts in their efforts to sponsor and improve upon special event programming and assist, where possible, any organization looking to create new community events or re-establish previous events.
- g. Revisit and evaluate the Special Events ordinance, process, costs, and grants to make it more user friendly and transparent, consistent, and accessible.

- h. Collaborate with external Economic Development organizations like World Business Chicago, Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), and Intersect Illinois.

- i. Enhance the Village website and create *one stop shopping* for business with staff resources to assist new business with the licensing, permitting, approval process, technical assistance, and resource navigation.

ECONOMIC VITALITY

Priority 3: Implement Tailored Economic Development Strategies in Commercial Corridors with Approved Plans or Major Infrastructure Investments

- a. Engage area business and property owners along the Chicago Avenue Corridor from Austin Boulevard to Ridgeland Avenue, to create and implement the Dr. Percy L. Julian Business District with economic development strategies to retain existing businesses and attract new investments.
- b. In conjunction with the Renew the Avenue project, partner with the Hemingway Business District to envision and implement economic development strategies to retain existing businesses and attract new investments along the corridor.
- c. Coordinate with the Village of Berwyn and /or the Berwyn Development Corporation on joint implementation of the updated/approved Roosevelt Road Corridor Plan and advance economic development strategies to retain existing businesses and attract new investments in Oak Park.
- d. Continue to partner with the City of Chicago on the development and implementation of the North Avenue Streetscape Plan and pursue economic development/redevelopment opportunities along the corridor

Organizational Effectiveness

Priority 1: Create environment of innovation and efficiency that supports effective core services.

- a. Update the Technology Strategic Plan to assess current systems and data, identify existing and future technological needs of the Village and make recommendations for needed maintenance and/or enhancements

- b. Assess generative artificial intelligence tools and other emerging technologies

Organizational Effectiveness

Priority 2: Maintain high quality core services across the Village

- i. Annually, through the budget process, assess baseline services and the resources needed (e.g., staffing levels, training, tools) to maintain a high-quality municipal workforce and strong core services for the community
- j. Successfully implement Village Board approved technologies in Finance (BS&A Cloud, EUNA), Public Safety (Tyler) and organization-wide(Microsoft 365, Granicus)
- k. Assess new technology opportunities and solutions in personnel management, parking and permitting operations

Organizational Effectiveness

Priority 3: Foster community/civic engagement to enhance service delivery and Village governance

- a. Expand the Welcome Center’s reach through mobile, place-based outreach that brings Village services into neighborhoods, building trust and increasing visibility throughout the community (proposed)

- b Develop a Welcome to Oak Park program to welcome new residents to the community, including a community resource guide (proposed)

- c. Grow the Village’s volunteer program to include more volunteering opportunities in support of Village efforts and more opportunities from other community

- d. Develop and implement a Community Engagement Playbook and toolkit to support departments in applying equitable, transparent, and inclusive engagement practices.

- e. Implement enhanced strategic communication, engagement, and marketing plans that position the Village for sustained success

- f. Invest in periodic training and development opportunities focused on governance