



January 9, 2025

Dear Members of the Oak Park Village Board,

As the Hemingway District Board, we are writing to express our strong support for the Renew the Avenue Business Assistance Grant Programs outlined in the attached document. While these initiatives are always essential for fostering economic vitality and enhancing the appeal of the Hemingway District, the expansion of them is particularly necessary due to the impact of the impending large-scale construction project in the district, which will create challenges for local businesses in maintaining customer access and engagement.

We believe these proposed programs will play a pivotal role in strengthening the Hemingway District and ensuring its long-term success. By supporting these initiatives, the Oak Park Village Board demonstrates its commitment to fostering a thriving and inclusive business environment, especially during a period of significant disruption.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We look forward to collaborating with the Village to implement these valuable programs. Please do not hesitate to reach out if we can provide additional information or assistance.

Sincerely,

The Hemingway District Board
Moses Valdez, President
Robin Titus Schwadron, Vice President
Wendy Giardina, Secretary
Patrick Mason, Treasurer
Chris Griffith
Jill Jerome
Lourdes Nichols
Allison Rosenwinkel

Renew the Avenue
Business Assistance Grant Programs
Hemmingway District Oak Park

Avenue Parking Garage – Increase Free Parking (February 1 – December 31, 2025)

- Current: 1 hour of free parking.
- Proposal: Extend free parking to 90 minutes until end of 2025 and then the free parking would revert back to 1 hour.

Expand the Commercial Façade Improvement Project (C-FIP) Grant Program to Non-Sales Tax Businesses in the Hemmingway District for 2025

- Current: Available to first-floor, sales tax-generating businesses only.
- Proposal: Include all licensed first-floor businesses, regardless of sales tax generation, for the year of 2025 only.

New Village Commercial Interior Improvement Project (C-IIP) Grant Program

- Proposal: Up to \$5,000 per first-floor business for interior upgrades (e.g. flooring, painting, lighting, HVAC, etc.) during calendar year 2025 only.

New Village Social Media Grant Program

- Proposal: 50/50 matching grant up to \$1,000 for social media marketing. Open to all licensed businesses in the district, on all floors, during calendar year 2025 only.

Boundaries of Business District

Eligibility for these grants would be restricted to businesses within the Hemmingway Business District, defined as Pleasant Street (South); Euclid Avenue (East); Ontario Street (North – Euclid to N. Grove Avenue); N. Kenilworth (West).