



# Village of Oak Park

## STAFF REPORT

**TO:** Plan Commission

**REVIEW DATE:** May 1, 2025

**FROM:** Village Staff

**PREPARED BY:** Michael Bruce, Village Planner  
Planning & Urban Design Manager

### P R O J E C T T I T L E

**PC 25-02: Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment.** The Petitioner, Village of Oak Park, seeks a text amendment to the Oak Park Zoning Ordinance as follows: **1.)** Amending Article 8 (“Uses”) – Table 8-1 (“Use Matrix”) by adding “Place of Worship – Dual Use” as a special use in all zoning districts, except the OS – Open Space District and H – Hospital District. **2.)** Amending Article 8 (“Uses”), Section 8.4 (“Principal Use Standards”), subsection M. (“Place of Worship”) by adding, “...and Place of Worship – Dual Use” to the heading and adding subsection 2., as follows: “Places of worship – dual use shall allow, through special use approval, an existing Place of Worship the ability to allocate unused areas within said Place of Worship for R-7 multiple family residential use or for general office use, as defined within this Ordinance. a. The sanctuary or the area of worship must continue to be used by the congregation. b. No additions shall be allowed to expand any proposed residential or office use. c. Provided the remaining sanctuary or area of worship is abandoned, the property shall become subject to the Adaptive Reuse provisions of this Ordinance.”

### A P P L I C A N T I N F O R M A T I O N

**APPLICANT:** Village of Oak Park, 123 Madison Street, Oak Park, IL 60302

### A N A L Y S I S

The proposed Zoning Ordinance text amendments are meant to allow places of worship the ability to allocate unused areas within their existing facilities by either renting space to outside businesses (office uses) or by converting underutilized space within the existing church building into residential use (R-7 Multiple-Family). The congregation shall continue to use the sanctuary or area of worship. Expansion of the existing church building would not be allowed.

This initiative is occurring as a result of church leaders seeking ways to repurpose church assets in underutilized buildings. Over the years, congregations have decreased in numbers. The proposed amendments would allow congregations facing challenges of declining membership and deferred maintenance to continue to fund their missions and outreach, and pay for the upkeep of their buildings, while using space that may no longer match the congregations needs. The Place of Worship – Dual Use amendments allow for creative and flexible changes to uses of church structures encouraging their preservation in the Village in a reasonable manner, and are consistent with the formerly adopted adaptive reuse amendments also enacted to support preservation of church

structures in the Village.

The two uses proposed are defined in our Zoning Ordinance as follows:

**General Office Use:** A business that engages in the processing, manipulation or application of business information or professional expertise. Such an office may or may not offer services to the public. An office is not materially involved in fabricating, assembling, or warehousing of physical products for the retail or wholesale market, nor engaged in the repair of products or retail services. An office does not include financial institution, government office, or industrial design. An office also does not include a business that provides employment services for temporary employment of semi-skilled and unskilled workers where potential workers meet on-site for assignment.

**Multiple Family Use:** A structure containing three or more dwelling units used for residential occupancy not designed as a townhouse dwelling as defined in this section.

## **Z o n i n g   O r d i n a n c e**

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The Plan Commission and Village Board must consider the following standards when determining appropriateness of the proposed Zoning Ordinance text amendment. The approval of amendments is based on a balancing of these standards.

### Standards for Text Amendments:

- a. The extent to which the proposed amendment promotes the public health, safety, and welfare of the Village.
- b. The relative gain to the public, as compared to the hardship imposed upon the applicant.
- c. The consistency of the proposed amendment with the Comprehensive Plan and any adopted land use policies.
- d. The consistency of the proposed amendment with the intent and general regulations of this Ordinance.
- e. Whether the proposed amendment corrects an error or omission, adds clarification to existing requirements, or reflects a change in policy.
- f. The extent to which the proposed amendment creates nonconformities.
- g. The extent to which the proposed amendment is consistent with the overall structure and organization of this Ordinance.

PROPOSED TEXT AMENDMENT:

**VILLAGE OF OAK PARK ZONING ORDINANCE: PLACES OF WORSHIP – DUAL USE**

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**ARTICLE 8. USES**

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**8.3 USE RESTRICTIONS**

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Article 8 (“Uses”) – Table 8-1 (“Use Matrix”) by adding “Place of Worship – Dual Use” as a special use in all zoning districts, except the OS – Open Space District and H – Hospital District.

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TABLE 8-1: USE MATRIX																		Use Standard § = Section
Use	R-1	R-2	R-3 -50 & -35	R-4	R-5	R-6	R-7	DT <sup>1</sup>	HS	GC	MS <sup>1</sup>	NA	NC <sup>1</sup>	RR <sup>1</sup>	OS	I	H	

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Public/Institutional																		
Community Center								S	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P		
Community Garden	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	§8.4.D
Community Service Center													S			S		§8.4.X
Cultural Facility	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	S	P	P	P	P	P	S	P	P		
Educational Facility – Primary or Secondary	P	P	P	P	P	P	P							S		P		
Educational Facility – University								S		S	S	S		S		P		
Educational Facility – Vocational								S	S	P	S	P	S	S				
Government Office								P	P	P	P	P	P	S	P	P		
Park/Playground	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	
Place of Worship	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	S		P	P	§8.4.M
Place of Worship – Dual Use	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S		S		§8.4.M
Public Safety Facility								P	P	P	P	P	P	S	P	P	P	
Public Works Facility																P		
Tour House/House Museum	S	S	S	S	S	S	S											§9.3.V
Utility	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	P	S	

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## 8.4 PRINCIPAL USE STANDARDS

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Amending Article 8 (“Uses”), Section 8.4 (“Principal Use Standards”), subsection M. (“Place of Worship”) by adding, “...and Place of Worship – Dual Use” to the heading and adding subsubsection 2., as follows: “Places of worship – dual use shall allow, through special use approval, an existing Place of Worship the ability to allocate unused areas within said Place of Worship for R-7 multiple family residential use or for general office use, as defined within this Ordinance. a. The sanctuary or the area of worship must continue to be used by the congregation. b. No additions shall be allowed to expand any proposed residential or office use. c. Provided the remaining sanctuary or area of worship is abandoned, the property shall become subject to the Adaptive Reuse provisions of this Ordinance.”

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### M. Place of Worship and Place of Worship - Dual Use

1. Places of worship in the non-residential districts are subject to the dimensional standards of the R-7 District for a non-residential use.
2. Places of worship – dual use shall allow, through special use approval, an existing Place of Worship the ability to allocate unused areas within said Place of Worship for R-7 multiple family residential use or for general office use, as defined within this Ordinance.
  - a. The sanctuary or the area of worship must continue to be used by the congregation.
  - b. No additions shall be allowed to expand any residential or office use.
  - c. Provided the remaining sanctuary or area of worship is abandoned, the property shall become subject to the Adaptive Reuse provisions of this Ordinance.

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### Recommendation

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Staff supports the above-referenced Zoning Ordinance text amendments as proposed.

*End of Report.*

- c. Plan Commission  
Courtney Willits, Plan Commission Attorney  
Craig Failor, Development Services Director
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