

# OAK PARK TOWNSHIP

Oak Park, Illinois



## Fiscal Year 2016 Annual Budget



April 1, 2015 to March 31, 2016

**OAK PARK TOWNSHIP**  
Incorporated 1903  
Township Form of Government

**Officers and Officials**

**Elected:**

**Supervisor**  
**F. David Boulanger**

**Clerk**  
**Gregory P. White**

**Assessor**  
**Ali ElSaffar**

**Trustees**  
**Mary T. Cozzens**  
**Clarmarie I. Keenan**  
**Adekunle B. Onayemi**  
**James J. Taglia**

**Appointed:**

**Gavin W. Morgan - Township Manager**  
**Jack Norton - Finance Director**  
**John FS Williams - Director, Youth Services**  
**Desiree M. Scully - Director, Senior Services**  
**Lisa DeNunzio-DeVivo - Executive Director, Community Mental Health Board**

**Prepared by:**

**Gavin Morgan**  
**Jack Norton**



GOVERNMENT FINANCE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION

*Distinguished  
Budget Presentation  
Award*

PRESENTED TO

**Oak Park Township**

**Illinois**

For the Fiscal Year Beginning

**April 1, 2014**

Executive Director

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# READER'S GUIDE TO USING THIS BUDGET

This guide has been included to inform the reader of the organization of this document.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

The table of contents is designed to locate specific topics quickly.

## INTRODUCTION

The introduction section contains the Budget Highlights, Transmittal Letter, Location Map, Community Information, Township Government, Township History, Township Elected Officials, the Township's Organization Charts and Department Services Summary, FY 15 Accomplishments and FY 16 Township Policy Statements, Mission, Goals and Objectives.

## BUDGET OVERVIEW

This section contains information on the Financial Policies and Budgetary Process which guide the development of the budget, as well as revenue and expenditure summary statements and accompanying tables and charts for all funds, including information on the number of full time equivalent (FTE) employees by department.

## TOWN FUND

The Town Fund consists of four departments: General Government, Senior Services, Youth Services, and Capital Outlay. General government includes Township Board, Township Administration, Clerk, Assessor, Building Services, Risk Management, and Other Charges. Organizational charts, revenues, line item expenditures, and the number of FTE employees are included for each department. A five year history of revenues and expenditures for the Town Fund is also included in this section.

## GENERAL ASSISTANCE FUND

The General Assistance Fund accounts for all revenues and expenditures to finance General Assistance - a program that aids needy residents. Revenues, line item expenditures, the number of FTE employees and a history of revenues and expenditures for the past five years are included in this section.

## COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH FUND

The Community Mental Health Fund accounts for all revenues and expenditures to finance Community Mental Health. Organizational charts, revenues, line item expenditures, the number of FTE employees and a history of revenues and expenditures for the past five years are included in this section for the Community Mental Health fund.

## FINANCIAL AND ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The Township's financial and accounting policies guide the budget process and establish parameters for budgetary decision-making. This section includes policies on: Budget and Appropriations, Capitalization, Debt Management, Fund Balance, Investments, Performance Measurement, Property Tax Levy, Revenue and Expenditure Management, Strategic Planning, and Accounting.

## SUPPLEMENTAL DATA

This section provides statistical information on such items as expenditure history, tax levies, equalized assessed valuations and pertinent laws governing the Township's levy and budget process.

## FIVE YEAR BUDGET

The five-year budget helps the Township Board and Township management to focus on long-term financial stability. This section covers forecasting methods, forecast assumptions, analysis of funds, and five-year revenue and expenditure projections for the Township's three funds.

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

The Glossary of Terms is included to help the reader with financial terms that may not be familiar.

## **INTRODUCTION**

This budget document is prepared for the Oak Park Township Board of Trustees, residents of Oak Park and other governmental units in order to clearly depict the Township's programs and financial operations.

The Introduction Section contains the Budget Highlights, Transmittal Letter, Location Map, Community Information, Township Government, Township History, Township Elected Officials, Organization Charts and Department Services Summary, FY 15 Accomplishments and FY 16 Township Mission, Goals and Objectives.

# OAK PARK TOWNSHIP

## BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

### In FY 2016:

- The Township will replace the administration building's roof and heating ventilation and air conditioning system.
- The Community Mental Health Board will lead and support a variety of community coalitions to address of their five-year Strategic Plan goals around homelessness, youth and families, and minority behavioral health.
- Senior Services will adapt to state-wide changes in the ways that Senior Services are provided and funded, so the Township continues to effectively serve those who wish to live independently in the community.
- Senior Services, along with its governmental partners in Oak Park and River Forest will engage in a coordinated effort with local non-profit and for-profit agencies and private owned businesses for the purpose of planning and hosting the sixth annual week long "Celebrating Seniors" event and Resource Guide.
- Youth Services will assess and adjust mentoring programs targeted to at-risk youth in the middle schools and high schools while involving adult mentors and partners from the community.
- Youth Services will update and upgrade its database for tracking outcomes of the various programs in the department.
- General Assistance will work with community partners serving the homeless and those threatened with homelessness.
- The Township will review its current personnel policy and adopt an updated policy to stay current with changes to laws.
- The Township will continue to offer exercise classes, lunch and learn opportunities, and incentives to encourage employee wellness.
- Township Administration will develop new security and safety policies and procedures at both locations and provide training to all staff.
- The Finance Department will submit the FY 16 Budget and FY 15 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for consideration to receive GFOA's Distinguished Budget Presentation Award and Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting.
- The Township Board will review and update the goals and objectives in the Strategic Plan to guide the development of the FY 17 Budget and direct the operations of the Township.





# OAK PARK TOWNSHIP

105 SOUTH OAK PARK AVENUE, OAK PARK, ILLINOIS 60302

July, 2015

*Supervisor*

F. David Boulanger

*Clerk*

Gregory P. White

*Assessor*

Ali ElSaffar

*Trustees*

Mary Cozzens

Clarmarie I. Keenan

Ade Onayemi

James J. Taglia

*Telephone*

708-383-8005

*Facsimile*

708-383-8062

*E-mail*

town@  
oakparktownship.org

*Website*

www.  
oakparktownship.org

## Oak Park Township Citizens:

We are pleased to present the Oak Park Township FY 16 budget for April 1, 2015 through March 31, 2016, which is the third fiscal year of the new Township Board's four-year term. This budget will enable us to continue our tradition of providing services that meet the needs of Oak Park's most vulnerable residents in a fiscally responsible way.

Included in the budget are descriptions of programs and services and detailed budgets for each of the Township funds: Town, General Assistance and Community Mental Health. All three Township funds presented in the FY 16 budget are balanced and there have been no cuts to personnel or service levels. Due to the Town Board's leadership, stable revenues, adequate fund balances, and the efficient use of resources, the Township's financial condition remains strong. The budget document provides a complete financial picture of Oak Park Township's programs, fiscal operations, revenues and expenditures.

FY 16 budgeted revenues are \$6,189,431, a 1.92% increase from FY 15 budgeted revenues. Budgeted operating expenditures for FY 16 are \$6,353,391, a 1.48% increase from FY 15 budgeted operating expenditures. Operating expenditures exceed revenues by \$163,960. The difference between revenues and operating expenditures will be resolved using fund balances in the General Assistance and Community Mental Health Funds. Fund balances are retained resources carried over from prior fiscal years.

Budgeted capital expenditures increase from \$76,987 in FY 15 to \$90,000 in FY 16. The Capital Outlay for FY 16 is assigned for Technology Enhancements (\$10,000) and for Capital Improvements and Renovation (\$80,000). Fund balances assigned by the Township Board for specific capital needs will be used to fund planned capital projects. \$15,000 has been budgeted for windows and \$65,000 has been budgeted for the replacement of heating and air conditioning units in the Township Administration location. \$10,000 is budgeted for the replacement and development of a new data base system for the Youth Services Department.

Combining the operating and capital expenditure budgets, the total FY 16 budgeted expenditures are \$6,443,391, a 1.67% increase compared to FY 15 budgeted expenditures. The difference between overall revenues and expenditures of \$253,960 will be funded using fund balances in the Township's three funds.

The Township complies with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and the budget meets all legal requirements.

### **FY 16 Planning Process**

The Township updates its strategic plan on an annual basis. The Township Board, with input from Township staff, reviewed and updated the strategic plan prior to developing the FY 16 budget. The updated Mission, Goals, and Objectives provided direction to staff in its preparation of the FY 16 budget. The Board has identified and prioritized five strategic directions: Service Quality, Community Needs, Financial Stability, Communication, and Board Leadership. The complete FY 16 Policy Statements document is included with the budget.

### **Budget Overview**

Revenue: Although economic conditions and the State of Illinois' fiscal position continue to affect the Township's ability to raise revenue, an increase of 1.9% in total revenue is expected for FY 16. By comparison, the five-year average is a 1.83% yearly revenue increase. The largest revenue increase in dollars for FY 16 is in the category of tax revenue. Budgeted tax revenue, which primarily includes property taxes, increases from \$4,617,711 budgeted for FY 15 to \$4,729,303 budgeted for FY 16 – an increase of \$113,172 or 2.45%.

Intergovernmental revenue is increasing from \$1,294,475 budgeted for FY 15 to \$1,304,518 budgeted for FY 16 – an increase of \$10,043 or 0.8%. Charges for Services is decreasing from \$145,070 budgeted for FY 15 to \$139,545 budgeted for FY 16-a decrease of \$5,525 or 3.8%.

The amount of property tax collected is limited by the Property Tax Extension Limitation Law (PTELL, 35 ILCS 200/18-185) with a waiver provided for new taxable property value and reduction in the size of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) districts. PTELL limits the increase in property tax that the Township may levy to 5% or the percentage increase in the Consumer Price Index during the 12-month calendar year proceeding the levy year, whichever is less. Based on PTELL's waiver provision, new taxable property value and property removed from TIF districts are not subject to tax caps in the first year they are included in the tax base. Oak Park Township has the option to incorporate projected new/TIF property value into a "balloon levy," which is a levy that accounts for the PTELL waiver. If the tax levy submitted by the Township to Cook County exceeds the allowable amount after accounting for actual new/TIF property, the Cook County Assessor will reduce the levy to comply with PTELL. Because the balloon levy amount is recorded as the budgeted amount, the Township's budgeted property taxes are sometimes greater than the property tax revenue ultimately collected.

The CPI rate applicable to the 2014 property tax levy is 1.5%, based upon the CPI for calendar year 2013. Thus, the increase in the 2014 levy to fund the Township FY 16 is limited to 1.5% without including new taxable property. For FY 16, The Township Board of Trustees approved a 2.0% levy increase, choosing to include a portion of new taxable property value and potential reductions in the size of TIF districts. Property tax revenue is expected to increase from \$4,453,711 budgeted for FY 15 to \$4,566,883 budgeted for FY 16 – a 2.5% increase. Levy increases are based on the amount that the county extends for the prior levy, which for the 2013 tax levy was \$4,477,337, so the 2014 levy of \$4,566,883 is 2.0% higher than the extended levy of 2013. Property taxes continue to be the largest revenue source for the Township, comprising about 74% of total revenue.

The other revenue sources are use of money and property and miscellaneous. The FY 16 budget for use of money and property is level with FY 15. The Township continues to be affected by the low interest rate market. The Township has made better use of its funds by allocating more of them in interest bearing accounts so that interest income is expected to remain level from \$14,800 in FY 15 to \$15,065 in FY 16. The Township continues to explore options to increase investment income while maintaining safety and liquidity. Other revenue sources did not change significantly in FY 16, and there are no new significant revenue sources.

In October 2014, one of the Township's depository institutions, the Illinois Metropolitan Investment Fund (IMET) was the victim to an investment fraud in one of its investment pools, the Convenience Fund. As a result, 2.77% of participant's portfolio assets in this fund were escrowed to reserve cash for the potential loss. As of March 31, 2015, the Township received some settlement distributions and expects to receive more, if not all, distributions in the near future. As of the end of its 2015 fiscal year, the Township had \$104,478 in escrow with IMET. However, for accounting purposes, the Township wrote down this asset to zero as an extraordinary loss, which reduced the investment income in each of the funds per its allocation of this asset in 2015. As the date of any recovery of this loss is unknown, no amounts have been budgeted for this in 2016.

Expenditures: Total expenditures are distributed among the categories of personnel services, fringe benefits, operating costs and services, external contracts and programs, capital outlay and other charges. Operating expenditures for the FY 16 budget increased 1.5% from FY 15 budgeted operating expenditures. FY 16 Capital Outlay is discussed on Pages 7-8 of this transmittal letter.

Budgeted operating costs and services expenditures had a small increase for these categories from \$1,417,406 budgeted for FY 15 to \$1,453,583 budgeted for FY 16. This represents a 2.6% or \$36,177 increase from the FY 15 budget. The increase in operating costs and services expenditures is primarily due to an increase of \$25,000 in budgeted expenditures for General Assistance payments due to a projection for a monthly average of five additional clients in FY 16.

Budgeted personnel services expenditures increased from \$2,345,497 budgeted for FY 15 to \$2,410,615 budgeted for FY 16. This represents a 2.78% increase from the FY 15 budget. Much of the increase in personnel expenditures is due to the average 2.0% wage increase effective April 1, 2015. In addition, the hours for five part-time positions in Senior Services were extended by 2.5 hours each week in order to extend the hours of service for the Senior Lunch Program/Home Delivered Meals.

Fringe benefits decreased from \$807,599 budgeted for FY 15 to \$774,959 budgeted for FY 16 or 4%. One of the primary reasons for this decrease is that the cost of health insurance premiums decreased by 4.45%, effective July 1, 2014 but will increase by 3.08% effective July 1, 2015. The other primary reason for budgeted fringe benefits to decrease is that the employer rate for the Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund decreased from 9.54% as of January 1, 2014 to 8.81% as of January 1, 2015, a decrease of 0.73 or 7.65%. Personnel and fringe benefit expenditures together comprise 49% of the total FY 16 budget.

External contracts and programs increased from \$1,673,961 budgeted for FY 15 to \$1,700,034 budgeted for FY 16, which is an increase of \$26,073 or 1.56%. This increase in external contracts and programs is primarily due to an increase in allocations to outside agencies in the Community Mental Health Fund by \$16,473.

**Fund Balances:** Fund balance is the difference between fund assets and fund liabilities of the three Township funds. The amount of revenues over (or under) expenditures represents the change in fund balance each fiscal year. Unassigned fund balance in the Town Fund is that portion of fund balance which is expendable and not subject to tentative management plans. It is the policy of the Township Board to maintain 4 to 6 months of operating expenditures as unassigned fund balance for the Town Fund and 4 to 6 months of fund balance for the General Assistance Fund. The policy of the Community Mental Health Board is to maintain 6 to 8 months of operating expenditures as fund balance for the Community Mental Health Fund.

The Township's overall fund balance for March 31, 2015 was \$3,284,651, which includes \$1,552,969 in the Town Fund, \$285,133 in the General Assistance fund and \$1,446,549 in the Community Mental Health Fund. In the Town fund balance, \$1,453,314 is unassigned and \$90,000 is assigned for capital improvements. The unassigned amount represents 4.4 months of 2015 budgeted operating expenditures, which is in-line with the fund balance policy of between four to six months of current years budgeted expenditures excluding capital expenditures. The fund balances for General Assistance and Community Mental Health Fund are restricted to their use. The restricted fund balance for General Assistance at March 31, 2015 was \$284,579, which represents 6.1 months of 2015 budgeted expenditures. The restricted fund balance for the Community Mental Health Fund at March 31, 2015 was \$1,442,587, which represents 9.8 months of 2015 budgeted operating expenditures.

### **Significant Non-routine Capital Expenditures**

Expenditures for capital outlay are unusually large expenditures that typically benefit the Town Fund generally rather than a single department. Budgeted expenditures for Capital Outlay increased from \$70,000 in FY 15 to \$90,000 in FY 16. Three major capital projects/acquisitions are planned for FY 16: 1.) Development and installation of software for a new database for Youth Services (\$10,000 estimated cost). 2.) Replacement and installation of new windows for the Township Administration Building (\$15,000 estimated cost), and 3.) Replacement of heating and air conditioning units for the Administration Building (\$65,000 estimated cost).

A budget summary for FY 16 is included with this budget transmittal letter, showing revenues by source and expenditures by category.

### **Debt Management**

The Local Government Debt Limitation Act 50 ILCS 405/1 (the Act) governs the debt limit of the Township. The Act sets the limit of debt for Oak Park Township, including existing indebtedness, at 2.875% on the value of the taxable property within the Township. The value of taxable property is ascertained by the last assessment for state and county taxes. The latest assessed value of property within Oak Park Township is for tax year 2014 and is \$1,383,005,873. Therefore, the legal limit of debt for the Township is \$39,761,419.

The only current long-term debt owed by the Township is for compensated absences and other post-employment benefits (\$176,653). There are no plans at this time to incur any additional debt for capital renovations. Capital renovations will be paid for with existing fund balance and will result in a decrease in the fund balance for the Town Fund.

### **Five-Year Budget Projections**

The FY 15 budget contains five-year budget projections for all Township funds; Town, General Assistance and Community Mental Health. The purpose of the five-year budget projection is to enable the Township Board and management to focus on long-term financial stability. The five-year projection includes FY 16 through FY 20, ending March 31, 2020.

Long-term financial projections for government agencies are a guide rather than a definite statement of future revenues and expenditures. A number of outside forces, which cannot be anticipated or forecasted, impact government budgets, especially long-term projections. Many of these factors are outside Township control; for example, state and federal revenues or mandates; changes in the national, regional or local economy; fluctuations in the prices of products or services purchased by the Township; and unanticipated emergencies or changes in service level priorities, as well as capital projects.

The revenues and operating expenditures for fiscal years ending March 31, 2016, through March 31, 2020, are projected using the FY 16 budget as the base for the calculations. Every revenue and expenditure account is projected and included. The assumptions and projections for the major revenue sources and expenditures are set forth in the budget section titled Five-Year Budget Projections.

A qualitative forecasting method known as “naïve forecasting” was utilized to project revenues. The naive forecasting method is best suited for revenue sources where a general stability from year-to-year can be assumed; a typical time period can be easily determined; the historical relationship between budgeted and actual revenue remains constant for the period being forecast; and all major factors affecting the revenue source have been included in the forecast.

### **Performance Measures**

In January of 2006, the Township Board adopted a Performance Measurements Policy. During their strategic planning, the Board identified performance measurement as a priority objective in the policy area of Service Quality. In FY 16, the Township will work to ensure that performance measures in the budget and annual report documents are meaningful and useful in improving service delivery.

### **Looking Forward**

Because the major source of revenue for the Township is property tax and the amount that can be raised through property tax is limited by a tax cap, it will be a challenge to keep the increase in expenditures to the same level as the increase in revenues. As an example, the property tax for FY 15 was capped at a 1.5% increase due to a Consumer Price Index (CPI) applicable to the 2014 levy year, and the CPI limiting the property tax levy to fund FY 17 will go down to 0.8%. At the same time, costs for fringe benefits are increasing at a rate of approximately 5%.

**Conclusion**

Because of the leadership of the Township Board of Trustees and the commitment of the Township's employees and volunteers, the Township will continue to provide a high level of service and programming to benefit the most vulnerable members of our community. The FY 16 budget prepares Oak Park Township for the coming year and the future as we continue to address our challenges without reducing the effectiveness of our programs.

Sincerely,

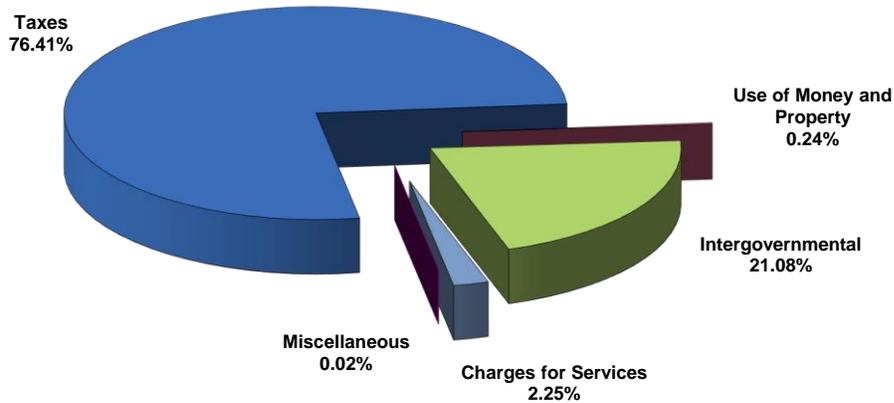


Gavin W. Morgan  
Township Manager

## BUDGET SUMMARY FY 16

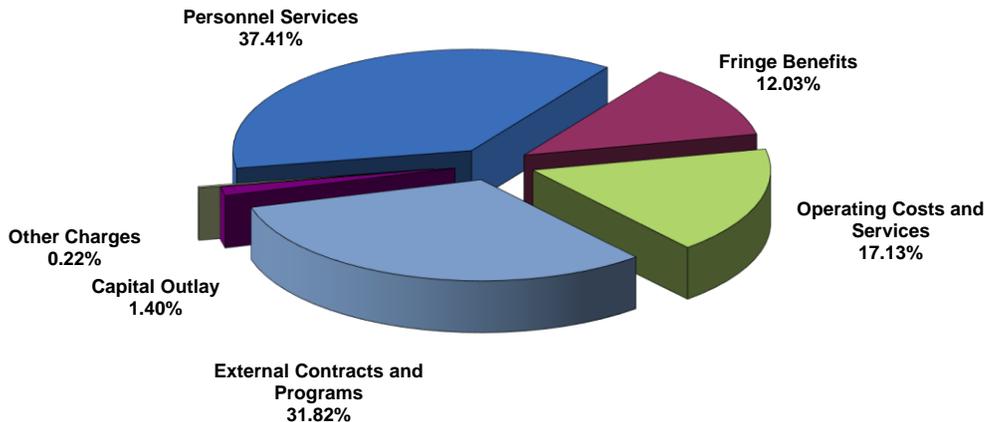
### REVENUES

<b>TAXES:</b>		<b>CHARGES FOR SERVICES</b>	
Property Taxes	4,566,883	Program Income	<u>139,545</u>
Personal Property Replacement Tax	105,420	TOTAL Charges for Services	139,545
Tax Increment Financing (TIF)	<u>57,000</u>		
TOTAL Taxes	4,729,303	<b>MISCELLANEOUS</b>	
		Miscellaneous	<u>1,000</u>
<b>USE OF MONEY AND PROPERTY</b>		TOTAL Miscellaneous	1,000
Interest	<u>15,065</u>		
TOTAL Use of Money and Property	15,065	TOTAL ALL REVENUE	<u>\$6,189,431</u>
<b>INTERGOVERNMENTAL</b>		Use of Fund Balances	<u>253,960</u>
Local	420,299	TOTAL ALL RESOURCES	<u>\$6,443,391</u>
State and Federal	<u>884,219</u>		
TOTAL Intergovernmental	1,304,518		

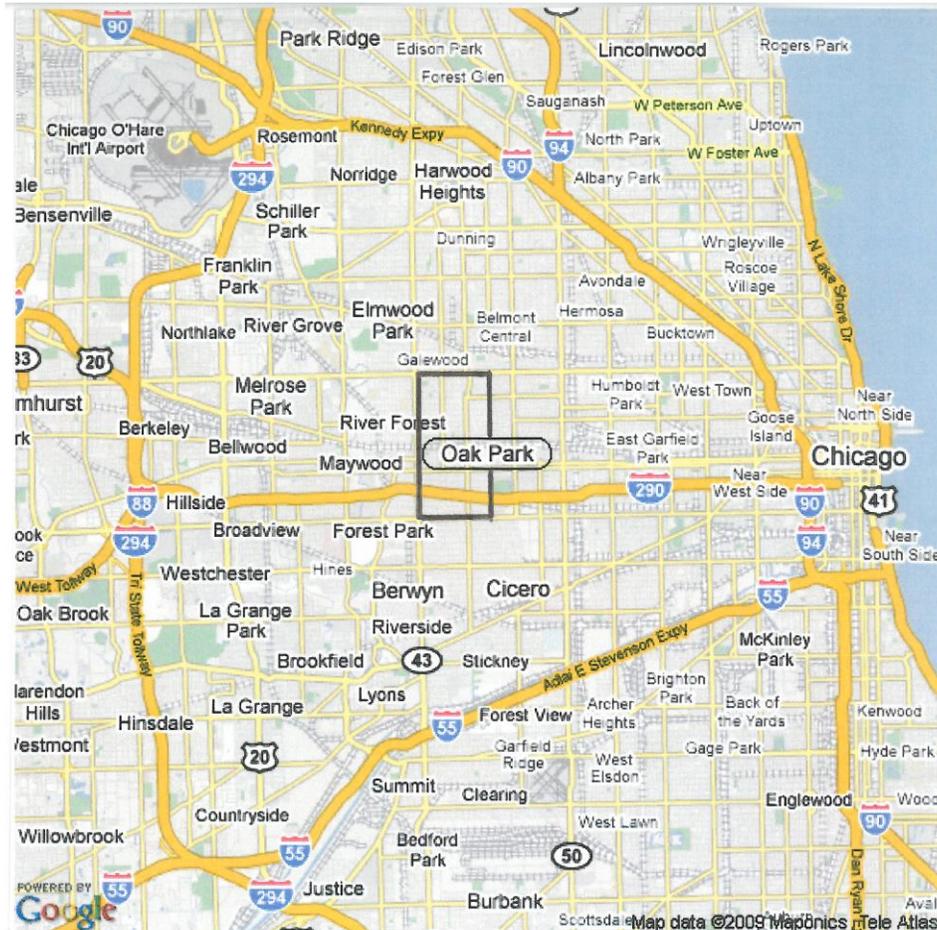


### EXPENDITURES

Personnel Services	2,410,615	Capital Outlay	90,000
Fringe Benefits	774,959	Other Charges	14,200
Operating Costs and Services	1,103,583	TOTAL ALL EXPENDITURES	<u>\$6,443,391</u>
External Contracts and Programs	2,050,034		



# LOCATION MAP



Town Hall  
105 South Oak Park Avenue  
Oak Park, IL 60302  
(708) 383-8005

*Senior Services located at:*  
130 South Oak Park Avenue  
Oak Park, IL 60302  
(708) 383-8060  
[www.oakparktownship.org](http://www.oakparktownship.org)

*Community Mental Health located at:*  
1010 Lake Street, Suite 616  
Oak Park, IL 60301  
(708)358-8855  
[www.cmhb-oakpark.org](http://www.cmhb-oakpark.org)

# COMMUNITY INFORMATION

## Location

First suburb directly west of the Chicago Loop  
 Boundaries: North Avenue to the north  
 Roosevelt Road to the south  
 Austin Boulevard to the east  
 Harlem Avenue to the west

## Population

52,066 (2013 Census estimate)

## Land Area

4.5 Square Miles

## Median Age<sup>1</sup>

	38.5
Under 18	24.9%
Over 65	10.3%

## Racial Profile<sup>1</sup>

White	64.9%
Black	20.8%
Hispanic	6.1% (Of Any Race)
Asian	5.2%
Other	3.0%

## Median Family Income<sup>1</sup>

\$105,625

## Median Household Income<sup>1</sup>

\$75,118

## Housing

Construction Improvement/Valuation <sup>2</sup>	
Building Permits	6,030
Valuation of Improvements	\$105,012,215

Home Sales, Single Family <sup>3</sup>	406 sold
Average	\$384,538
Median	\$365,000

Condo Sales <sup>3</sup>	212 sold
Average	\$136,514
Median	\$109,000

Townhome Sales <sup>3</sup>	28 sold
Average	\$293,859
Median	\$310,500

## Rental Rates<sup>4</sup>

Studio	\$650 - \$795
1 Bedroom	\$800 - \$1,095

2 Bedrooms	\$1,100 - \$1,695
3 Bedrooms	\$1,495 & up
Homes	\$1,900 & up

## Family Household<sup>5</sup>

Average household size	3.30
Average family size	3.27

## Dwellings<sup>2</sup>

Single family	9,626
2 flat buildings	724
2 flat units	1,448
3 flat buildings	146
3 flat units	438
Row Houses or Townhomes	574
Rental (4 or more units)	
Buildings	371
Number of units	6,376
Condos (4 or more units)	
Buildings	294
Number of units	4,682

## Arts

Oak Park Arts District  
 Oak Park Area Arts Council  
 Oak Park Art League  
 Public Art Advisory Commission

## Fire

Class 2 rating – three fire stations  
 Accredited Fire Department  
 Accredited EMS Department

## Governments

Village of Oak Park  
 Oak Park Township  
 District 97 Elementary School District  
 District 200 High School District  
 Park District of Oak Park  
 Oak Park Public Library

## Health Care

2 Community Hospitals  
 1 Kidney Dialysis Center  
 1 Mental Health Center  
 Several social services agencies dealing with housing, economic development, mental health, health care, people with disabilities, youth and senior citizen services.

## Library

1 main library and 2 branches

**Local Newspapers**

Oak Leaves  
Wednesday Journal

**Museums**

Ernest Hemingway Foundation/Museum  
and Birthplace  
Frank Lloyd Wright Preservation Trust  
Pleasant Home Foundation  
Unity Temple Restoration Foundation  
Historical Society of Oak Park-River Forest  
Wonder Works Children's Museum

**Music**

The Symphony of Oak Park and River Forest  
Oak Park Concert Chorale

**Parks & Recreation Facilities**

7 recreation centers  
13 parks totaling 80 acres of parkland  
2 outdoor swimming pools  
1 indoor ice rink  
1 plant conservatory  
1 gymnastics center  
Cheney Mansion  
Pleasant Home

**Places of Worship**

3 Jewish congregations  
30 Protestant and non-denominational churches  
(15 denominations)  
4 Roman Catholic parishes  
1 Buddhist community  
1 Baha'i

**Police**

Main station located in lower level of Village  
Hall, 123 Madison  
Residential Beat Officers  
Several satellite stations throughout Oak Park

**Public Transportation**

2 rapid transit lines  
1 commuter rail line  
Several bus routes  
2 taxi cab companies  
Senior citizen bus service

**Schools**

District 97	8 public elementary schools 2 public middle schools
District 200	1 public high school Composite ACT Scores 24.4 Average SAT Scores 641 Critical Reading Math, 644 Writing 611
District 504	1 community college
Private	4 elementary schools 1 Catholic co-ed high school

**Theatre**

Oak Park Festival Theatre  
Open Door Repertory Company  
Lake Theatre  
Madison Street Theatre  
Oak Park Performing Arts Center

**Tourist Information**

Oak Park Visitor's Center, 1010 Lake Street

**Utilities**

Electricity	ComEd
Natural Gas	NICOR Gas
Local Phone Services	AT&T, etc.
Water Source	Lake Michigan
Cable	Comcast
U-Verse	AT&T Cable

**Distance to O'Hare Airport**

10 miles - 25 minutes

**Distance to Midway Airport**

8 miles -28 minutes

**Distance to Downtown Chicago**

9 miles - 20 minutes - via Eisenhower  
Expressway or public transportation

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, 2009-2013 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate

<sup>2</sup> Village of Oak Park, Development Customer Services Department

<sup>3</sup> Oak Park Township Assessor, 4/1/14 – 3/31/15

<sup>4</sup> Oak Park Housing Center

<sup>5</sup> U. S. Census 2011-2013 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates

## TOWNSHIP GOVERNMENT

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN ILLINOIS

Illinois has the largest number of local governmental units of any state in the country. In 2012 there are 6,963 units.<sup>1</sup> The types of local governments range from the familiar such as school districts, municipalities, and townships to less familiar such as drainage districts. Illinois has 1,431 units of township government.<sup>2</sup>

There are a number of factors that contribute to the abundance of local government units in Illinois. Restrictive taxing limits, commonly referred to as "tax caps," promote creation of additional governments when tax rate limits are reached. In Illinois education is financed by a separate unit of government, school districts. In many other states, schools are funded by general purpose governments such as municipalities. Finally, in rural areas it is difficult to provide public services such as ambulances or fire protection to areas of low population density unless the service is provided through a special district with boundaries beyond a city or village.<sup>3</sup>

### TOWNSHIP GOVERNMENT

In Illinois 85 out of 102 counties have township government. Townships are governed by the Township Code (the "Code") 60 ILCS 1 et seq. The Code sets forth various powers which townships may exercise depending upon the needs of local constituencies. Each township has the corporate capacity to exercise the powers expressly granted to it, or those necessary implied from express grants, and no others. This limitation is called "Dillon's Rule" and affects all Illinois government except home rule municipalities and counties. Like other non-home rule units, townships have no inherent powers, but only those granted to them by the constitution or authorized by statute.

### OAK PARK TOWNSHIP

The boundaries of Oak Park Township are contiguous with the boundaries of the Village of Oak Park. Oak Park Township is governed by an independently elected Board of Trustees which acts as the policy making body. The Township and the Village serve the same population of citizens but provide distinct services. The Township provides primarily social services including services for senior citizens, youth, the mentally ill and the poor. In addition, the Township offers a variety of local governmental services such as voter registration, mass transit reduced fare cards and handicap parking placards. Although the Assessor in Cook County determines the assessed value of real estate, the Oak Park Township Assessor provides a number of services to assist property owners. The Assessor's office answers questions regarding assessed valuations, property tax statements and assists homeowners with securing appropriate exemptions.

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, 2012 Census of Governments, [www.census.gov/govs/cog2012](http://www.census.gov/govs/cog2012)

<sup>2</sup> Illinois State Comptroller, [www.ioc.state.il.us/Office/LocalGovt/](http://www.ioc.state.il.us/Office/LocalGovt/)

<sup>3</sup> Frazier, Mike, Herald-Review.com, June 4, 2006.

A complete description of the services provided is included in this document under the program highlights section for each program area.

It is not uncommon for residents to mistake the Township for the Village or vice versa or to assume that the Township is responsible for typical municipal type functions such as garbage pickup or infrastructure improvements. The Township, however, is a totally separate unit of government and provides unduplicated social services in the community.

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## TOWNSHIP HISTORY

Township government was established in Providence, Rhode Island in 1636. It is the oldest existing unit of government continuing to serve on the North American continent. Township government was in existence for 140 years prior to the signing of the Declaration of Independence in 1776. The language of the Declaration of Independence reflects many of the signers' experience with township government.

The Declaration's statement that "government should derive its just power from the consent of the governed" is demonstrated at the Annual Town Meeting held by townships on the second Tuesday of each April. The Annual Town Meeting is still an important function of our nation's 16,364<sup>1</sup> townships after more than 360 years.

The annual Town meeting is a direct descendant of original town meetings where citizens had the right of free discussion on every public issue. They elected their own officials, called "selectmen" to ensure that the decisions made at the town meeting were carried out. This early form of Township government played a significant role in the development of democracy in America.

### HISTORY OF TOWNSHIP GOVERNMENT IN ILLINOIS

In Illinois, township government has been referenced since the early 1800's, being cited as a governmental organization in the 1827 Book of Laws, and by the General Assembly. Prior to the establishment of Townships in 1848, a County Commission form of local government prevailed. Under this form, the county unit was the governing body, with commissioners responsible for the administrative and legislative affairs of towns and villages within a county.

In 1849, voters within Illinois counties were given the right to adopt the township form of local government. With the option of choosing a township type of government, voters had the opportunity to elect officials from their local communities who would be directly responsible for conducting business necessary to maintain their communities.

Over the next several decades, the response to township government was overwhelming and today, the township form of local government operates in 85 of Illinois' 102 counties. Illinois ranks third in the United States in the number of township governments with a total of 1,431 providing services to more than 12 million people.

### HISTORY OF OAK PARK TOWNSHIP

Oak Park was made a township by the Cook County Board on November 17, 1902. The incorporation of Oak Park Township followed the formal incorporation of the Village of Oak Park by nearly a year. The governments have shared the same boundaries since that time.

The first slate of officers met on April 7, 1903 and included George Jenkins Bliss as Township Supervisor; James E. Tristram (as both Township Clerk and, by tradition, Village Clerk, until 1969 when the two offices were separated by electors); Thomas H. Gale as Township Collector; and Chris F. Hafner as Assessor.

Oak Park Township residents also elected five Justices of the Peace and five Constables (this office was eliminated in 1936). Constables served legal papers for the courts. Justices of the Peace presided over the only courts of those early years, and also sat on the Township Board until 1961 when they were replaced by Township Auditors (this last title changed to "Trustee" in 1974).

In 1936, a small group of electors put the Supervisor in charge of relief for the village poor. The state authorized Oak Park Township to levy an annual tax of thirty cents on each dollar of assessed valuation for Poor Relief (now called General Assistance). By virtue of this duty, the Township Supervisor has become the Township Treasurer.

The Township Board, comprised of four Trustees and the Supervisor, is the policy-making body of Oak Park Township. The Township Assessor and Collector did not (and still do not) serve on the Township Board. The position of Township Collector was eliminated as of December 31, 2013 due to legislation passed by the Illinois General Assembly in May 2012.

Oak Park Township has grown over the years and currently serves a population of just over 52,000. In addition to continuing to provide financial relief to needy area residents, Oak Park Township funds and administers many programs for area seniors and youth. Oak Park Township Senior Services and Youth Services were established in the late 1960's. The Township also provides funding to various mental health agencies through its Community Mental Health Board which was formed in 1973.

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Adapted from:

Ahlswede, L. E., *Township Government Today*, Township Officials of Illinois, 1968.

Bach, E. E., *Keeping Pace with the Times: A Short History of Oak Park Township, 1903-1987*.  
Unpublished paper, August 30, 1987.

Smith, B. E. Today more than ever, Township government should be celebrated. *Illinois City and Township Official*, p. 4, Vol. 59, No. 3, November 1998.

Fiscal Focus, Illinois Office of the Comptroller

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<sup>i</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, 2012 Census of Government, [www.census.gov/govs/cog2012](http://www.census.gov/govs/cog2012)

## TOWNSHIP ELECTED OFFICIALS

Oak Park Township is governed by an independently elected Township Board of Trustees. The Township Board consists of the Township Supervisor and four Trustees, elected at large from the township. The Clerk, Assessor, and Collector are elected simultaneously with the Board. The Assessor and Collector do not vote. The Township Clerk votes only in the case of a tie vote to fill a vacancy in a township office.

### Township Supervisor

The Township Supervisor is the chief executive officer of the Township. 60 ILCS 1/70-15. The Supervisor serves as Supervisor of General Assistance and chairperson/voting member of the Township Board. The Supervisor has numerous financial reporting responsibilities, and is the treasurer of all township funds. In Oak Park Township, many of the operational duties of Township Supervisor are currently delegated to the Township Manager and other staff such as the Finance Director.

Township Supervisors have the ability to appoint certain township officers and employees, including the township attorney and General Assistance staff.

### Township Trustees

The duties of the Township Trustees are set forth in the Illinois Township Code (60 ILCS 1/80 et seq.). The Township Trustees with the Supervisor are the legislative arm of the Township setting policy for the Township Supervisor to administer.

### Township Clerk

The duties of the Township Clerk are set forth in the Illinois Township Code (60 ILCS 1/75 et seq.). The Clerk is the keeper of the Township's records and the clerk of all Township meetings. The Township Clerk conducts Board meetings in the absence of the Township Supervisor. The authority to conduct the meeting does not confer the right to vote.

### Township Assessor

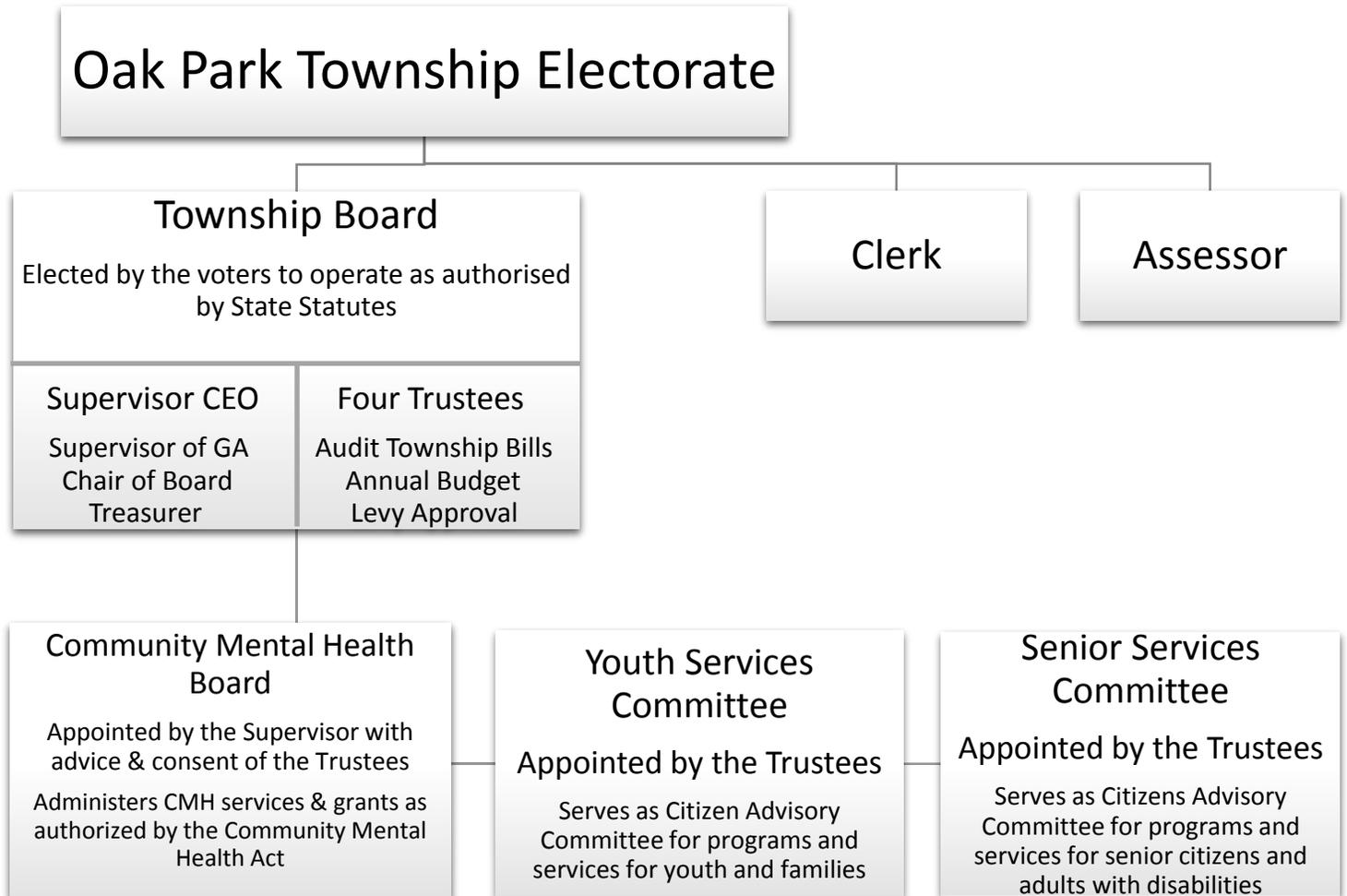
Within Cook County the Township Assessor does not assess property values. However, the Oak Park Township Assessor's office provides numerous services to residents regarding property issues.

### Township Collector

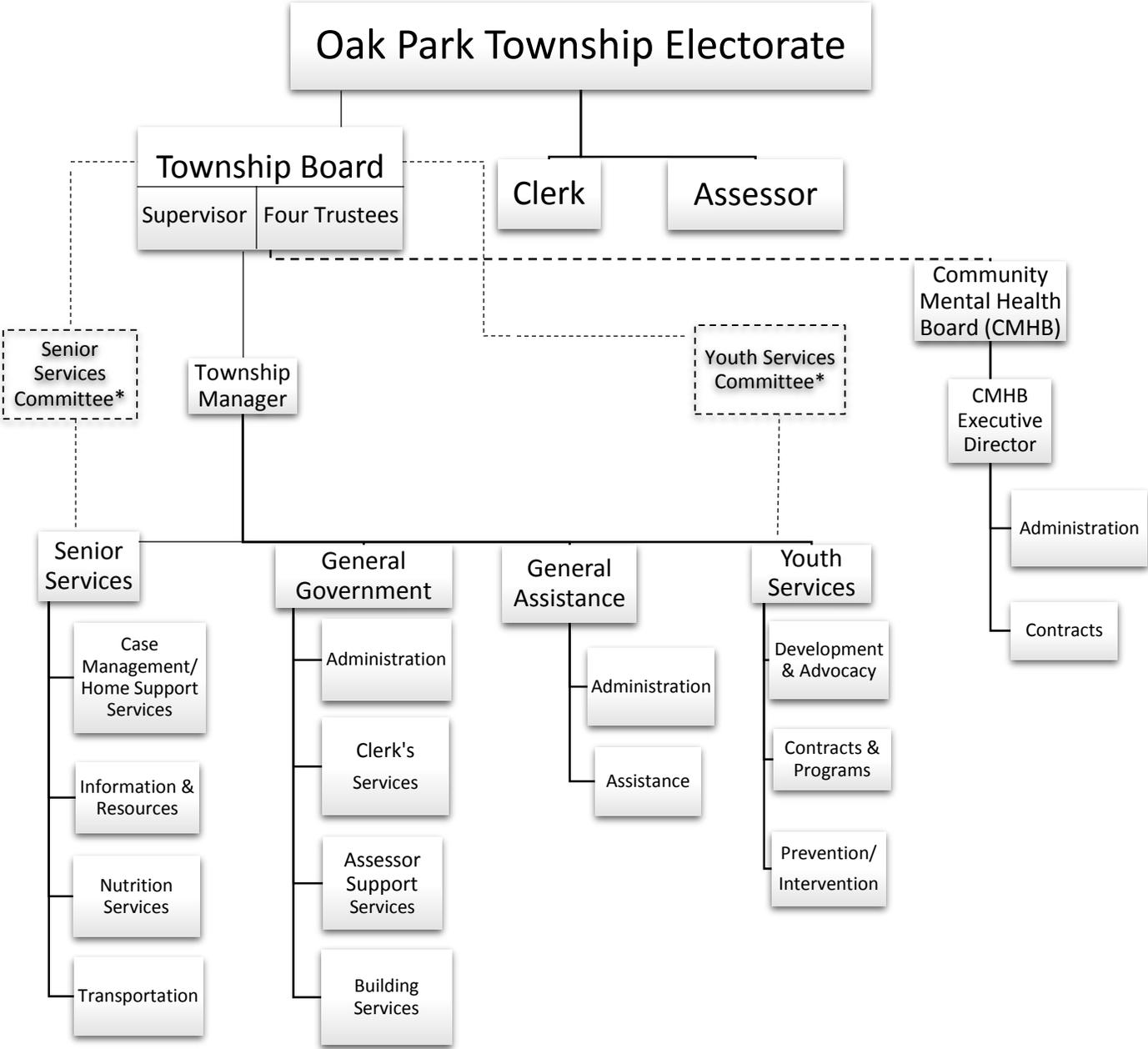
The Township Collector within Cook County did not have any duties or responsibilities associated with the position and did not vote as a member of the Township Board. The Oak Park Township Collector historically had been an active participant at Board meetings and accepted special liaison assignments in the community. However, the Illinois General Assembly voted in May 2012 to eliminate this position for Townships located in Cook County as of December 31, 2013.

# ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

## ELECTED OFFICIALS AND APPOINTED BOARD AND COMMITTEES



# Functional Organizational Chart



\*Advisory Committees to Township Board

## DEPARTMENTAL SERVICES

- **GENERAL GOVERNMENT**

- **ADMINISTRATION**

- Administrative services
    - Fiscal administration
    - Human Resources

- Information technology
    - Risk management
    - Services to persons with disabilities

- **CLERK'S SERVICES**

- Record keeping
    - Voter registration

- **ASSESSOR SUPPORT SERVICES**

- General information on property taxes
    - Appeals for reductions in property tax assessments
    - Homeowner and senior property tax exemptions and senior tax freezes
    - Records of residential real estate sales and trends

- **BUILDING SERVICES**

- Maintenance and repair of Township buildings and grounds
    - Fixed assets and inventory schedule

- **SENIOR SERVICES**

- **CASE MANAGEMENT/HOME SUPPORT SERVICES**

- Adult Protective Services
    - Caregiver Resource Center
    - Case management

- In-Home Chore Services
    - Money Management Program
    - Caregiver Respite Services

- **INFORMATION & RESOURCES**

- Aging and Disability Resource Network
    - Affordable Will Preparation
    - Assistance in obtaining federal State and local benefits

- Benefit Access Application
    - Caregiver Support
    - Carrier Watch Program
    - Energy Assistance
    - Health Insurance Assistance
    - Health Screenings and Education

- **NUTRITION SERVICES**

- Senior Dining Facility
    - Home-Delivered Meals
    - Dine-Out

- **TRANSPORTATION**

- **YOUTH SERVICES**

- **CONTRACTUAL SERVICES**

- Services employing mentoring as a preferred strategy that focus on:

- substance abuse prevention/early intervention

- **DEVELOPMENT & ADVOCACY**

- Community Cafés

- FACE-IT (Substance abuse prevention/intervention)

- Mentoring

- Community Youth Advocate

- AMENS Group

- Peace Circle Training

- Scholarships

- Young Children's Fund

- Youth Conference

- YES, Motivational Mentoring

- Youth Network Council

- Sunrise Mentoring

- **PREVENTION/INTERVENTION**

- Gang and Drug Task Force

- Youth Interventionist Program

- TIME (Teen Initiative for Meeting Expectations)

- **GENERAL ASSISTANCE**

- **ADMINISTRATION**

- **ASSISTANCE**

- Financial assistance for unemployed adult or disabled residents

- **INFORMATION AND RESOURCES**

- NICOR Gas Sharing program administration

- Holiday Food and Gift Basket Program

- Job Fairs

- Client Workshops

- **COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH**

- **ADMINISTRATION**

- Assessment, planning, development, coordination and evaluation of behavioral health and developmental disability services and system of care

- Network of Care website for information, services, advocacy, legislation, support groups and community calendars

- Advocacy activities on behalf of persons with disabilities at the local, state and national level

- **CONTRACTUAL SERVICES**

- Funding and oversight of community behavioral health and developmental disabilities contracts

## **FY 15 ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

During FY 15, the Township took actions to address the policy priorities identified by the Township Board in the strategic planning process. The narrative below is organized by priority areas that the Board of Trustees identified in the FY 15 Strategic Plan. Some of the achievements of the Township address more than one policy area, while some are specific to one of the Board's priorities. Together these accomplishments further the Board's overall mission of assisting Oak Park Township residents by providing a variety of governmental services and resources, with a special emphasis on advocacy and partnerships in human service programs that benefit at-risk youth and senior citizens as well as community members dealing with mental illness and financial struggles. Each of these accomplishments is described in more detail in the appropriate section of the budget document.

### **I. SERVICE QUALITY**

The FY 15 budget document developed by the finance department received the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) Award for Excellence in Financial Reporting for the twelfth consecutive year. Staff continues to make improvements to the performance measures presented in the document in order to enhance the budget's usefulness as a decision-making tool for the Board.

The Finance Department continues to review and update process and outcome measures across Township departments to inform the budget presentation. Youth Services has contracted with an outside provider to assess needs for data collection relevant to Youth Services programs.

The senior management team participates in regular meetings to discuss challenges and opportunities within their departments, as well as potential for cooperation across departments and serving interconnected needs. Management is also encouraging informal discussions and sharing among front-line staff.

Senior Services staff continues to monitor and participate in discussions at the state and regional levels on the future of senior service provision in Illinois. Staff is able to leverage the Township's position in the state to influence policy decisions, so that the interests of older residents in the community are a priority. As the state continues to shift its approach to Senior Services, Oak Park Township will continue to adapt to changing needs, systems and processes.

### **II. COMMUNITY NEEDS**

The Community Mental Health Board (CMHB) convenes several coalitions and consortiums to discuss community needs and opportunities. These collective efforts include addressing homelessness, behavioral health services to minority populations, developmental disabilities, and youth and families. In most cases, Township staff from

other departments also participates in these coalitions. The Township's General Assistance department provides monthly reports to the Township Board of Trustees, COG, and the Homeless Coalition to inform them of general trends and their impact on services. Youth Services, Senior Services, and General Assistance, and CMHB staff have made interdepartmental referrals and also assisted each other by making referrals to services outside the Township when appropriate.

The Township also contracts with other agencies to provide services in the community for early childhood, emergency financial assistance, job training, youth services, and behavioral health needs. In FY 15, the Township began providing funding to a local non-profit, Prevail, for its Emergency Assistance program to help Oak Park residents avoid loss of shelter.

Several community partners have utilized Township facilities for their programming needs. Users have included the League of Women Voters, Housing Forward, and the IGOV committee and youth mentoring agencies.

### III. FINANCIAL STABILITY

The Township closed out FY 15 with fund balances that met or exceeded the Board's fund balance policy of four to six months of operating expenditures for the Town Fund and the General Assistance Fund, and six to eight months of operating expenditures for the Community Mental Health Fund. Long range financial planning has allowed the Community Mental Health Board to support program development by several of the agencies that it funds. The Township's approach to planning and fund balances also makes it possible to fill the funding gaps caused by delays in reimbursement from the State of Illinois for Senior Services, to develop new programs to meet emerging needs for youth in the community, and to increase General Assistance programs and payments based on the level of client needs.

The Township has acquired federal funding through the State of Illinois in the form of an underage drinking prevention grant. Youth Services and Senior Services have also accepted private pay clients in the FACE-IT (Youth) and Money Management (Senior) programs.

Participation in the Intergovernmental Personnel Benefits Cooperative (IPBC) has kept the Township's health insurance costs below the general market trend. Wellness topics have been presented to staff every month, and more than ten percent of staff are taking advantage of the Township's fitness incentive. Staff also accessed biometric screening through the wellness program.

### IV. COMMUNICATION

The Township now has a part-time staff member focused on public information and getting the word out about the activities and accomplishments of the Township through the Township's website, social media, and office areas. The Township's website includes annual financial and performance reports.

The Township provides information for the Village of Oak Park to include in its regular newsletter that is mailed to all Oak Park households, and in the Village's e-news which is emailed to those who opt-in to receive that service. Contact information for Township services is also provided in the newsletter and on the Village's website.

#### V. BOARD LEADERSHIP

The Board of Trustees continues to review the health benefits package and other compensation offered to employees to ensure that it is fair and affordable to both the employees and the tax payers of Oak Park. For FY16, the Board increased the level of automatic life insurance coverage covered by the Township from a flat \$5,000 to a level equal to each employee's annual salary.

Members of the Board of Trustees participate on the Village of Oak Park Intergovernmental committee (IGOV), hosting meetings, providing input and leadership in collecting and discussing data on the finances and cooperative action among the taxing bodies that serve Oak Park. The Township Supervisor and Township Manager attend bimonthly Council of Governments (COG) meetings to share information and discuss common interests with the leaders of other Oak Park taxing bodies. Trustees have also been a presence at local events representing the Township, including the Farmer's Market, various festivals, and the annual Day in Our Village event organized by the Village of Oak Park.

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**Oak Park Township – FY16**  
April 1, 2015-March 31, 2016  
**Mission, Policy, Goals, Objectives**

The Township mission, policy, goals and objectives are developed through a strategic planning process that includes the ideas, concerns and issues raised by staff and citizens – clients, volunteers and standing committees. Annually, the Township Board reviews the past plan to define the direction for the next fiscal year. The task is to define objectives in a focused way that results in activities with measurable annual outcomes.

**MISSION**

Oak Park Township assists residents by providing a variety of governmental services and resources, with a special emphasis on advocacy and partnerships in human service programs that benefit at-risk youth and senior citizens as well as mentally ill and financially struggling community members.

**I. SERVICE QUALITY**

**Policy**

Maintain quality service through established advisory committees and citizen input that guides Township Board policy development and resource allocation. Collaborate with other agencies for efficiency and improvement of Township services.

**Goals**

- A. Maintain service quality through continuous input from advisory committees, services recipients and other stakeholders.
- B. Adjust policy and resource allocation based on program need and accomplishments.
- C. Seek cooperative relationships, including with other governmental units that support and extend the Township's mission.

**Objectives: Ongoing**

1. Continue to improve on documenting program outcomes to inform budget development and presentation – e.g., new database design including enhanced outcome measures for Youth Services programs.
2. Promote cooperation among Township divisions to provide coordinated and efficient services – esp., for homeless.
3. Monitor and modify Senior Services operation and funding depending on the requirements of the new managed care state contracting.
4. Support assessor services through shared use of staff, space and resources.

**Objectives: Current**

1. Track progress and outcomes and report to the Board on:
  - Youth mentoring efforts, Youth Interventionist and Face-It program, e.g., monthly summaries.
  - MCO contracted services to senior residents and Senior Services CCA contracted service issues and outcomes.

2. Work toward uniformity of residency standards in other CC townships in GA assistance to homeless.
3. Collaborate in funding and services with local governments to support the Youth Interventionist program.
4. Report on collaborative efforts proposed by the Oak Park Intergovernmental Committee (IGOV) and cooperate in efficient program development.

## II. COMMUNITY NEEDS

### Policy

Identify the need and provide or help fund social services within the Township's mission and resources. Review and revise programs to achieve effective and efficient use of resources to meet needs.

### Goals

- A. Identify emerging needs in Senior Services, Youth Services, General Assistance and Voter Services and create or modify programs to meet the needs within Township mission and resources.
- B. Report on delivery of services including: (1) Needs served, (2) Implementation effort, (3) Evaluation, and (4) Timely revisions.

### Objectives: Ongoing

1. Monitor needs and collaborate with Prevail, Food Pantry, PADS and other organizations with missions close to the Township's to most efficiently address citizen needs.
2. Continue contractual support for the Collaborative for Early Childhood Care and Education data collection and other efforts and report on meetings with governing body from D97, D200 and VOP.
3. Continuously update information and referral services to address emerging needs, esp., develop assistive/adaptive technology for seniors at different levels of need.

### Objectives: Current

1. Collect data, analyze and report trends in General Assistance, their impact on the program and ways to improve services to clients with special attention to:
  - Job readiness and search practices
  - Community service and volunteering.
  - GA grant levels and use of funds.
  - Services to homeless residents.
2. Promote open time use of 130 S. Oak Park Ave. for expanded OPT services and non-profit use, esp., programs and intergenerational activities.
3. Provide existing GA services for 18 to 25 year old youth in the community, especially resident homeless youth and young adults, and coordinate all OPT related services with partner agencies.
4. Support PADS and Prevail in efforts to provide transitional assistance to Oak Park residents to avoid loss of shelter.
5. Collaborate with all Oak Park agencies in the "Wild About Wellness" movement and develop program components related to Township client needs.

### III. FINANCIAL STABILITY

#### Policy

Maintain long-range financial integrity and stability.

#### Goals

- A. Maintain a unified, efficient financial system for the collection, audit and release of Township funds that meets the highest standards for local government accounting.
- B. Manage Township resources to provide for long-range financial stability.
- C. Consider opportunities to diversify revenue sources.
- D. Conserve funds through use of volunteers and leveraging of private sources for services.
- E. Maintain relationships with state and local elected officials to promote Township interests.

#### Objectives: Ongoing

1. Adjust finances to needs and trends, and maintain a fund balance within policy.
2. Respond to opportunities for grants and other new revenue sources that have government units as likely recipients.
3. Monitor compliance with internal control procedures to meet Township policy, statutory and auditor requirements.

#### Objectives: Current

1. Document in Board policy the standards for granting Youth Services external contracts.
2. Negotiate equitable sharing of cost with units in intergovernmental agreements.
3. Monitor and report on trends in health insurance coverage and costs with partner taxing units with employees, including wellness-fitness agreement and impact of OPT employee subsidy for monthly fitness costs.

### IV. COMMUNICATION

#### Policy

Maintain Township communications to ensure the ready availability of information about Township programs and related outside services.

#### Goals

- A. Maintain awareness in the community of Township programs and services.
- B. Serve as an information and referral point for community services.

#### Objectives: Ongoing

1. Seek innovative ways to increase Township communications and work to add personal appeal through testimonials, quotes and case examples.
  - Use Village's OP/FYI and resident email for OPT service announcements.
  - Use OPT website, Facebook page, reception areas, surveys, and citizen visits to communicate programs and services.

2. Communicate Township's programs, services, and legislative concerns to state and local elected officials.
3. Promote consistency in logo, palette, and general design of the Township digital and print presentations.
4. Make available to all residents an annual accounting of services provided and resources used.

Objectives: Current

1. Semi-annually, report to the board and Oak Park and River Forest Councils of Governments on the status and outcomes of the Youth Interventionist program.
2. Promote regular staff communications among partner taxing units on shared concerns for youth and senior welfare.
3. Plan at least one booth appearance at OP Farmers Market to raise awareness of services and answer citizen questions.

## V. BOARD LEADERSHIP

Policy

Use Board policy and action direction to develop and maintain staffing and service standards and expectations for organizational outcomes.

Goals

- A. Develop staff hiring, compensation and benefits policy and ensure implementation.
- B. Set operational policy, implementation standards and outcome expectations.
- C. Review and revise policies, as needed.

Objectives: Ongoing

1. Update annually the strategic plan to inform fourth quarter budget development for the next fiscal year.
2. Use the adopted environmental conservation policy (PlanItGreen: Environmental Sustainability Plan and ComEd energy audit) to guide purchases and office practices.
3. Revise old or write new board policies in a timely manner to provide consistency in future decisions and continuity as board members change.

Objective: Current

1. Annually update employee compensation package, including benefits, based on a salary and benefit study of comparable organizations.
2. Review the current employee grade level correlation with salary levels to ensure a competitive and fair distribution.