



For Release at 8 a.m., Feb. 10, 2020

Contact: Jim Prescott
708 717 2110
jprescott@prescottgroupllc.com

NEWS RELEASE

**LAKE STREET IMPROVEMENT PROJECT SET TO BEGIN;
WILL RECONSTRUCT, RESTORE AND RENEW OAK PARK'S CENTRAL CORRIDOR**

***Better Lake Street to Inform Public,
Support Lake Street Businesses***

OAK PARK IL (Feb. 10, 2020) -- After years of planning and preparation, construction of the Lake Street Improvement Project (LSIP) is set to begin this spring and will reconstruct, restore and renew the Oak Park's central tourism, retail and business corridor from Harlem Avenue to Austin Boulevard when work is complete in late 2020 before the holiday shopping season.

LSIP involves three construction projects that will feature streetscaping, sewer and utility replacement and street resurfacing. The \$15 million project will be supported by Better Lake Street, an integrated communication program with an "open for business" message.

Better Lake Street is designed to inform the public about the project and bolster Lake Street retail and commercial businesses – as well as their customers and clients – during construction.

Project representatives began outreach to Lake Street businesses and the community in summer 2019 to raise awareness about the project, hear concerns, answer questions and prepare for construction.

The Better Lake Street outreach program includes up-to-the-minute project information on the project's Twitter account (@BetterLakeSt) and detailed information on the project website (www.betterlakestreet.com). Village and project representatives will host public open house meetings on Feb. 11 and 13 and will meet regularly with businesses and business districts.

-more-

Better Lake Street/2

The LSIP/BLS team is working closely with Village officials to promote parking at five 24/7 public garages and with businesses to address their concerns and needs, such as customer access, deliveries, employee parking and other considerations.

Better Lake Street also includes a “shopper rewards program” to encourage customers to continue to support local businesses in Downtown Oak Park, the Hemingway District and Pleasant District during construction.

Planning for LSIP began in 2006 and has included substantial public involvement that guided design, which was completed in 2016-2019. The Village Board approved various components of LSIP in 2018 and 2019. LSIP involves three projects under one program:

1. Streetscaping: Harlem Avenue to Euclid Avenue
2. Water and sewer main improvements: Grove Avenue to Euclid Avenue
3. Street resurfacing: Euclid Avenue to Austin Boulevard

Streetscaping and Resurfacing (Harlem Avenue to Euclid Avenue):

LSIP will replace deteriorated infrastructure between Harlem and Euclid that was installed in 1989. LSIP is designed to replace aging sewer and water mains, reduce sidewalk clutter and improve accessibility.

Key features of the streetscaping portion of LSIP include:

- Street resurfacing
- Sidewalk replacement
- New lighting
- New traffic signals
- New trees and landscaping
- New sidewalk furniture

The streetscape and resurfacing work will be completed between April and November. Cost of the streetscaping portion of the project is \$10.6 million, with an additional \$300,000 budgeted for new traffic poles and mast arms.

The work will require full closure of some portions of Lake Street and adjacent sidewalks, all of which the LSIP/BLS team will frequently communicate to the public and affected businesses and building occupants.

-more-

Better Lake Street/3

Water and Sewer (Grove Avenue to Euclid Avenue):

Work at Lake Street and Oak Park Avenue will involve removal and replacement of aging water and sewer infrastructure, which has not been replaced since it was installed in the 1890s and early 1900s.

Westbound and eastbound traffic on Lake Street will experience periodic closures and detours, with some of them occurring during nighttime hours so as to limit inconvenience to business, customers, clients and residents.

The water and sewer work will be completed between March to May. Cost of the water and sewer portion of the project is \$2.1 million.

Street Resurfacing (Euclid Avenue to Austin Boulevard):

LSIP includes plans to resurface Lake Street from Euclid Avenue to Austin Boulevard, the first new surface for the heavily used street since 2001. Work is scheduled to start in the summer, after the highly attended graduation ceremonies for the Oak Park River Forest High School Class of 2020.

The resurfacing work will be staged to allow Lake Street to remain open to vehicles and to maintain pedestrian access while curbs and sidewalks are rebuilt.

The street resurfacing work is scheduled for June to September. Cost of Lake Street resurfacing is \$2 million.

Open House Meetings, Feb. 11 and 13:

Better Lake Street open house meetings are scheduled for 6-8 p.m., Tuesday, Feb. 11 at the OPRF Museum, 129 Lake St., and 6-8 p.m., Thursday, Feb 13, at the 19th Century Club, 178 N. Forest.

The open house meetings will provide the public with an opportunity to learn about LSIP and Better Lake Street and speak with project and village representatives.

...