



# City of Oak Park Heights

Tree City USA

Winter 2018 Newsletter

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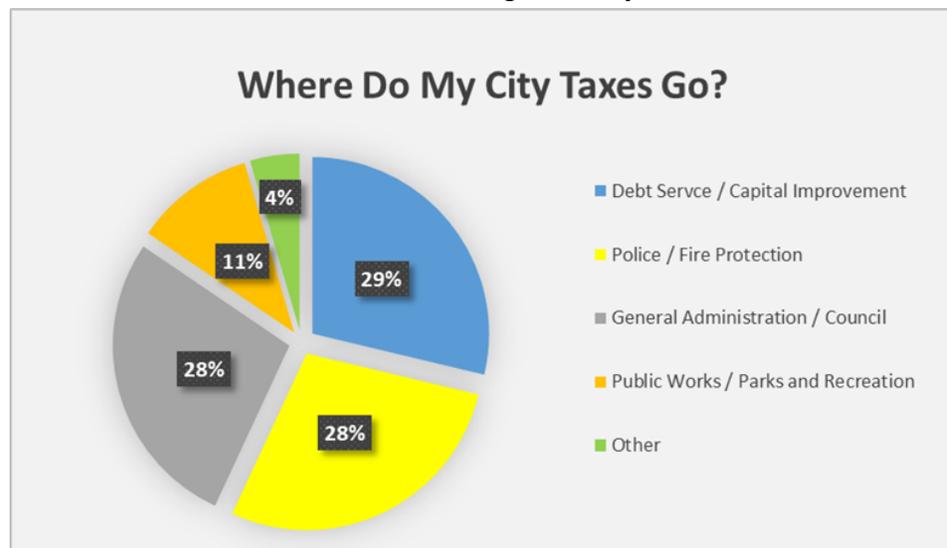
## City 2019 budget update

The City's Budget is utilized to fund essential services such as 24-hour police protection, fire department, snow plowing, road maintenance, solid waste & recycling services, parks & trails and a myriad of other services our Citizens expect.

On December 11, 2018 the City Council adopted the City's 2019 Budget with a total expenditure of \$5,800,888. This is a slight decrease of \$7,550 compared to the Adopted 2018 Budget. While the City's expenditures for operations increased by \$117,000, a 2.92% increase compared to 2018 operation expenditures, there were reductions in the capital improvements and General Obligation Bonded Debt Payments totaling \$125,000, or a -6.97% reduction as compared to 2018.

The 2019 budget has increased costs in insurances and general labor costs estimated at \$168,000. Other reductions were made throughout the remaining budget to keep the 2019 Budget total similar to the 2018 Budget total.

These City expenditures are supported by various revenues such as permits, licenses, intergovernmental, charges for services and taxes. Property Taxes however support 92% of the budgeted expenditures. The Property Tax Levy for the 2019 Budget is \$5,090,246 and is a reduction of \$238,255 from the 2018 Property Tax Levy. The following is a chart comparing the 2018 taxes to the estimated 2019 taxes and showing where your tax dollars are used:



continued to Page 2...

**Budget...continued from Page 1****Two vital facts should be noted:**

City residential property values increased on average 7.1% as compared to 2018, however due to the reductions made by the City in the 2019 expenditures and the related tax levy, property taxpayers in the City will likely not see an increase to their City property taxes for 2019, and perhaps a small reduction.

Xcel Energy received a material reduction in their property values from the State of Minnesota. In short, the State reduced their taxable values which reduces their property taxes. The taxable value reduction decreased an estimated at \$19,653,600. This adjustment equates to \$190,000 reduction in City Property Tax Collections. This is important to note because much of these costs then shift to other City taxpayers. The City has expressed concerns about this to the State of Minnesota and will continue monitor these reductions.

**City surpasses goal for Home Energy Squad visits!**

Earlier this year through a partnership with Xcel Energy, the City of Oak Park Heights set a goal to help residents save money on their energy bills by offering discounted visits by the Home Energy Squad to the first 20 Oak Park Heights residents who signed up. The City surpassed its goal of 20 residential visits and Xcel Energy gave the City \$500 prize towards purchasing trees for the community. These trees will help Oak Park Heights continue its commitment to being a Tree City USA community.



Standard Home Energy Squad visits are still available and now is a great time to take advantage of this opportunity!

Home Energy Squad offers a customized and convenient way for you to make energy-related improvements to your home. For the small fee, the Home Energy visit includes the installation of materials such as LED bulbs, programmable thermostat, door and attic hatch weather stripping, high-efficiency showerhead, faucet aerators, and water heater insulation, temperature assessment and adjustment.

***Interested Xcel Energy customers should call 866-222-4595 or visit [HomeEnergySquad.net](http://HomeEnergySquad.net) to make an appointment.***

**Stoplight concerns on Highway 36**

Minnesota Department of Transportation Traffic Engineering develops timing and coordination plans, responds to customer inquiries, monitors system performance, detects operational and maintenance problems, provides quality control and inspection, and coordinates signal turn-ons. If you have any comments, concerns, or issues with the traffic signals along Highway 36, please contact the Minnesota Department of Transportation metro signal department at [metrosignaloperationsDOT@state.mn.us](mailto:metrosignaloperationsDOT@state.mn.us). It is extremely helpful to them if you notify them of the date, time, and location surrounding your comment so they can investigate further.

## Hydrants

Note the location of the nearest hydrant to your home. It is extremely helpful and appreciated that residents help city staff and the fire department in maintaining hydrants clear of snow. Keeping a hydrant clear and easily accessible could save precious time in the case of an emergency.

## Trash receptacles

During a snow event on a trash pickup day, it is helpful to the street plowing crew when residents keep trash receptacles from creeping too far into the street. Please be aware on trash day if a snow event is occurring. The plows will likely be out.

## Winter parking reminder

No parking is allowed on City streets during the hours of 1:00am and 6:00am November 1 through March 31. Please be aware that these parking restrictions are in place and enforced regardless of whether or not there has been recent snowfall. Vehicles left parking on the streets may be removed without notice by the Oak Park Heights Police Department.

## Risk trees

Winter is a good time to look for structural problems in trees in your yard and near your home. When leaves are gone, it is a lot easier to see risk issues such as broken, hanging limbs, cracks in large branches and main trunk unions, and decay issues such as cavities (wildlife holes, openings in the trunk), or conks (shelf fungi) on the main trunk, on large branches, or at the base of the tree.

If a large tree has died back from the top or has had signs of decline (small leaves, early fall coloration, thin leaf canopy) in the past few years, it should be examined for decay and other risk factors. Being proactive about tree risk situations can prevent serious damage and injury.

## Hiring a tree service/landscape company

When hiring a tree service and or landscape company for tree pruning, chemical treatment or tree removals contractors are required to have a current Tree Worker's License with the City of Oak Park Heights as required by City Ordinance 1307. A list of licensed tree workers can be obtained from City Hall.

## Winter landscaping checklist

- Prune dead, diseased or unsafe branches
- Prune elm and oak trees
- Inspect your trees and shrubs for ice and snow damage
- Have hazardous or dead trees removed by a licensed tree worker (Call City Hall for a list)

## Tree problems?

If you have a problem with a tree or shrub, such as insects, diseases, site factors, or just want to have a plant identified, call Lisa Danielson, the City Arborist at 651-439-4439 or via e-mail at [ldanielson@cityofoakparkheights.com](mailto:ldanielson@cityofoakparkheights.com). She can either answer your question over the phone or make an appointment for a site visit. This service is free for residents of Oak Park Heights.



## Go GREEN: Pay & View Oak Park Heights Utility Bills Online



We accept...



### Pay ONLINE

Go to [www.CityOfOakParkHeights.com](http://www.CityOfOakParkHeights.com)

1. Click "Pay Utility Bill"
2. You will go to our payment processor's website where you should register and make your payment

### Or CALL

**1-877-885-7968** (have your bill handy to provide your account number)

### View Bills Online

Go to [www.CityOfOakParkHeights.com](http://www.CityOfOakParkHeights.com)

1. Click "View Utility Bill"
2. You will go to our payment processor's website to register
3. You will get an email each time your bill is ready

*You don't have to pay online to view your bills online.*

### WHY?

*Help save natural resources by viewing and paying online.*

- Easy, fast and secure
- Pay immediately, schedule a payment or set up Auto-Pay
- Keep costs down; opt out of paper bills
- Print receipts, view payment history and more



### City Meetings (subject to change)

#### City Council:

2nd and 4th Tuesdays at 6:00 p.m. (during summer months, the Council may only meet once per month)

#### Planning Commission:

2nd Thursday at 6:00 p.m.

#### Parks Commission:

3rd Monday at 6:00 p.m.

Agendas and Minutes are posted on the City's website:  
[www.cityofoakparkheights.com](http://www.cityofoakparkheights.com)

### Fourth quarter 2018 utility bills

**There is an outdoor utility payment drop box located in the landscaped circle directly outside the City Hall entrance. This will allow for you to drive up to the box to drop off your payment rather than having to get out of your vehicle.**

Utility bills for the fourth Quarter of 2018 (October 1 – December 31) will be mailed to residents in January and will be due February 9, 2019.

Auto pay is available. With auto pay, there is no need to waste time writing and mailing a check. Paying your utility bill electronically allows you to save time and money on stamps and late fees. The amount you owe on your utility bill is automatically withdrawn from the account you designate on the billing due date each month. You will continue to receive your bill so that you know the date and amount to be withheld from your account.

If you are interested in participating, please call or stop by City Hall to obtain an enrollment form. The form is also available on the City's website, under City Information, Forms & Handouts. Call Jennifer Pinski at City Hall, 651-439-4439, if you have questions.

## Notice of Sewer Rate DECREASE

The City of Oak Park Heights annually reviews the water and sewer rates to assure adequate funding for the operation of the utility systems. Based on the review, a rate increase for the Water Utility is NOT required. The water rates were raised in 2018 and projected billings for 2019 are anticipated to be sufficient to fund the 2019 Water Budget.

Sanitary Sewer projected revenues when combined with a reduction in Metropolitan Council Environmental Service (MCES) fees indicates that no rate increase will be necessary for 2019. The MCES made a significant correction to the City's flow data which caused the city's share of the MCES charges to decrease by 15% or \$79,000. Therefore the 2019 the sewer rate will be decreased to the 2017 minimum fee of \$78.50 instead of the present \$81.00.

The following are the sewer rates effective January 1, 2019

1. A quarterly minimum charge of \$78.50 for the first 15,000 gallons of water used per quarter
2. A rate of \$5.70 per 1,000 gallons for water used above 15,000 gallons up to 50,000 gallons.
3. A rate of \$5.95 per 1,000 gallons for water used above 50,000 gallons.

Residential sewer rates are determined by the amount of water used in the first quarter of each year. Commercial, industrial, institutional and high density residential sewer rates are based on actual usage.

## Winter skating

Oak Park Heights maintains three rinks for park patron use. Brekke Park, located on 5500 Omar Avenue N. has a pleasure rink and a boarded hockey rink. Cover Park, located at 15366 58<sup>th</sup> Street N., which is on the same intersection of Beach Road and Peller Avenue, has a pleasure rink. Both parks have warming houses for patron's convenience.

Ice is made as soon as weather permits and usually takes up to two weeks to form a solid ice sheet thick enough to skate on.

### Warming house Hours:

Weekdays: 3:30 PM—9:00 PM

Weekends: 9:00 AM—9:00 PM

*Ice rinks are open weather permitting.  
Warming houses will be open and staffed  
when the rinks are open.  
Check the City's website for rink status.*

## Temporary structures/storage tents

City Ordinance does not generally permit the placement of temporary tent storage structures in the City. In many cases, these become weather-worn and detract from general neighborhood appearance. The City would ask that you please remove these from your property over the coming months if you do have one.



However, if your site needs some temporary storage, such as for a remodeling, garage sale, etc., the City amended its ordinances to allow these types of structures on a temporary basis if a permit is secured. With an approved permit, which has NO COST, a temporary structure can be placed on your site for up to fifty days. Please call or stop by City Hall if you are thinking about a utilizing a temporary structure.

FRIDAY • DECEMBER 28 • 10AM TO 2PM

# SPECIAL • HOLIDAY • CRAFT EVENT!

COVER PARK SHELTER/WARMING HOUSE  
15366 58TH STREET NORTH  
OAK PARK HEIGHTS



**FREE  
EVENT!**



• FUN WINTER •  
• THEME CRAFTS •



**MAKE &  
TAKE!**

ALL AGES ARE WELCOME. CHILDREN TEN AND UNDER MUST BE WITH AN ADULT. EMAIL [GZEULI@Q.COM](mailto:gzeuli@q.com) WITH QUESTIONS.

## Garbage and Recycling

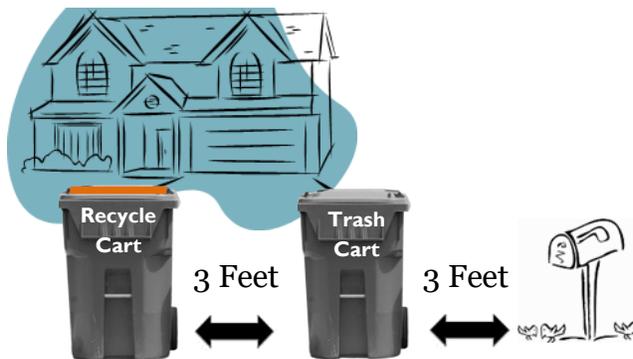
In addition to the typical garbage and recycling pickup, the City also covers the disposal of yard waste, large household items, and 'white-goods' such as refrigerators, couches, chairs, desks, water-heaters, stoves, dish-washers, dryers, etc. for single family residences and complexes with four units or less in Oak Park Heights. In order to have these items picked up in a timely fashion, please contact City Hall at least three days prior to collection day so that the special truck may be dispatched to your home.



Some items not included in your monthly fee are extra bags of garbage not placed in your container. The City's waste hauler, Tennis Sanitation, will bill you \$1.50 per bag. Some other items that are picked up for a fee are sinks, toilets and construction debris. You will be billed by Tennis Sanitation at a regulated rate as monitored by the City. Electronic and hazardous waste cannot be picked up, but can be brought to the Washington County Environmental Center, 4039 Cottage Grove Drive in Woodbury. Call 651-430-6655 for directions and hours.

The City's general fund covers the cost of garbage and recycling services for single family residences and multiplexes with four or less units. In order to keep costs down for the City, please use the container size that fits your needs. If you currently have a large container that you are not filling each week, please call City Hall to have your container size reduced to a small or medium size.

Please be sure to place your waste & recycling carts away from any obstructions or property.



For example: buildings, vehicles, mail boxes etc. They also need to be reachable by the mechanical arms on the trucks.

Tennis Sanitation wants to minimize the potential for damage to any property and would appreciate your cooperation.

If the carts are placed next to obstructions they will not be serviced.

Do you have questions on where to dispose of certain items that cannot be thrown in your trash can, such as tires, batteries, televisions, and paint? Check out the Washington County Disposal Directory at <https://recyclesearch.com/profile/wcdd>. The website is very user-friendly. Simply type in the search bar the material you would like to dispose of and you will receive a listing and map of various drop-off sites. The Washington County Disposal Directory is provided by the Washington County Department of Public Health and Environment as a public service. The website also provides links to help you learn about recycling and waste reduction. Remember, recycling reduces the amount of materials going into the waste stream and saves money.

## Please do not flush diapers, rags or “flushable” wipes

The City’s Public Works Department provides for the collection, operation and maintenance of a wastewater system that ultimately leads to treatment and the return of water back to the ecological system at an environmentally safe level.

Oak Park Heights has approximately 28 miles of sanitary sewer mains, roughly 750 sanitary sewer manholes and four lift stations. Each year about 30,000 linear feet or roughly six miles of the City’s sanitary sewer mains are cleaned and inspected. Mains that require a higher level of maintenance are cleaned more frequently. This routine maintenance helps to prevent blockages and sewer backups; however when unauthorized items are flushed into the sanitary sewer, the City’s ability to prevent backups is no longer controllable.

The Public Works crew has recently been removing diapers and rags from multiple sewer lift stations on a weekly basis. City Staff cannot control residents from flushing prohibited items such as diapers, rags (sometimes referred to as “flushable” wipes) and grease down the sewer. It is up to individuals to not do so. Flushing these items creates a high risk of the sewer backing up into homes, for not only the violator but also for the neighbors as well.

The City asks that you please be mindful of what you flush down your toilet as some items are not meant to be flushed and WILL clog-up downstream. If this occurs, it can cause a sewerage backup creating significant property damage to either your, or your neighbor’s home. Further, these damage repair costs are typically attributable to the private property owner.

To help prevent backups, please dispose of the following items properly by NOT dumping in a drain or flushing down the toilet:

- ◆ Diapers
- ◆ “Flushable” wipes (These do not dissolve, therefore they clog sanitary sewer lines and pumps)
- ◆ Cooking grease and oil
- ◆ Sanitary napkins
- ◆ Rags or shop towels
- ◆ Garage waste products such as oil, grease, gasoline, antifreeze
- ◆ Household waste such as ashes, corrosives, glass, metals, paint, poisons, or solvents
- ◆ Yard waste such as sand, soil, or mud.

Sanitary sewer problems should be reported to the City of Oak Park Heights Public Works Department during business hours by calling City Hall (651) 439-4439. The public works department also has a 24 hour emergency only hotline (651) 485-2304. OPH, as in many other Cities across Minnesota, the sewer main is owned by the City of OPH. City staff are responsible to maintain the City main lines. The sewer service or lateral from your home, business or other property to the City sewer main is the property owner’s responsibility. That means the property owner is responsible for clearing any blockages in the service lateral between the home and the main.

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## The City of Oak Park Heights is on Facebook!

Find and “Like” the City of Oak Park Heights on Facebook to receive up-to-date information on events, meetings, programs, and city news, including information on emergencies, utilities, road construction, and links to information from other agencies that affects our residents.



## Attention Pet Owners

### Leash law reminder

The City of Oak Park Heights City Council updated its Leash Law Ordinance effective March 1, 2015. All dogs and cats that are off the premises of the owner must be on a leash at all times and under control of the owner or another designated person. If you do not have your dog or cat on a leash, you will be in violation of the new Ordinance.

### Clean up after your pet

Also, when you are out walking your pet, please remember to bring a plastic bag. Pet owners are required by City Ordinance to clean up pet waste on public and private property. Removal and proper disposal of pet waste helps keep our City clean and healthy.

### Pet licenses

All dogs and cats in the City for more than 30 days are required to have a City Pet License. There is no charge for this service and it could save your pet from a trip to the animal shelter. Bring proof of your pet's rabies vaccination to City Hall to receive a pet license and tag. For more information, please call City Hall at 651-439-4439. City Ordinances can be viewed on the City's website: [www.cityofoakparkheights.com](http://www.cityofoakparkheights.com).

## Water line freeze ups

Water lines in Minnesota are typically buried between six (6) feet deep and eight (8) feet deep and only freeze during extreme low temperature conditions. When extremely low temperatures persist for long periods of time, consider the following to prevent frozen water and sewer service lines:

- \* The most likely spot for water lines to freeze is where it enters the house/building where there is little or no insulation.
- \* Make sure to clear the area of storage items so warmer room air can reach the pipes. This may mean removing items from a vanity cabinet or in a utility room.
- \* Use heat tape on water lines attached to outdoor walls with poor insulation.
- \* Use a warm hair dryer, but do not leave unattended. Heating copper pipe too much can break the soldered joints.
- \* Make sure the roof vent is not covered with snow or is otherwise blocked. Snow build up over the vent will cause the sewer drain to slow down. This prevents the warmer air in the sewer system from venting up the house line and keeping the line above freezing.
- \* Monitor water flow in the nearest (to the outside) fixture closely. Run your cold water for a couple minutes and then take the temperature of the water. If it is below 40 degrees Fahrenheit as a last resort, you can let your cold water run from this faucet at a pencil thickness. You must first call the City of OPH to notify before any water and sewer usage billing credits will approved.
  - \* During extreme low temperatures for long periods of time, and if your water service is prone to freezing, you should consider running water non-stop when there is no one home or no water is being used for a period of time. Ensure that there are no sewer blockages.
  - \* Be mindful and cognizant of unintended consequences of sewer or septic backups if running water continuously.
  - \* If a home's thermostat isn't hardwired and relies on a battery, property owners should make sure that battery is fresh.

## Snow plowing

The City has contracted with Raleigh Trucking for plowing services during the 2017-2018 winter season. Raleigh Trucking has provided plowing services to the City of Oak Park Heights for approximately 38 years, and many of the company's employees have several years to decades of experience plowing the same City routes. When it snows, please remember the following:



- ◆ City collector streets and arterial streets are plowed first. Residential streets and cul-de-sacs plowing occurs after collector and arterial streets are cleared.
- ◆ City staff is responsible for plowing trails. Trail plowing begins as soon as vital infrastructure property is cleared of snow.
- ◆ To minimize property damage, snow is piled within cul-de-sacs. Snow removal occurs when lack of storage space necessitates it be done.
- ◆ Not only can blowing and or throwing snow from private property onto the public street cause hazardous road conditions; it also violates MN Statute 169.42. Please do not throw snow from your driveway on to the City street.
- ◆ During snow events keep trash bins back from the street so plows may pass without damaging your trash bin.
- ◆ Snowplows inadvertently obstruct mailboxes with high snow accumulation. Residents are responsible for keeping their own mailbox clear of snow.
- ◆ The City will repair or replace properly installed mailboxes that are physically struck by a snowplow. A temporary mailbox will be provided until a permanent post can be installed in spring.
- ◆ The City repairs major lawn damage from to snowplow blades. Major lawn damage will be repaired with black dirt and seed in the spring (Typically in May). Minor scratch and divot repair is the property owner's responsibility.
- ◆ To advise the City about a slick intersection or to report property damage caused by a snowplow, please call City Hall at (651) 439-4439.

## Oak Park Heights local business & development news

You may have noticed the construction happening around town. It's been an exciting time for the City with a number of new commercial and residential projects.

### Welcome New Businesses:

Muddy Cow – 5991 Norwich Avenue North

### Coming Soon:

Oak Park Senior Living Addition—72 Unit Senior Apartment Complex —13912 Lower 59th St. N.

Panera Bread—13535 60th St. N. (at the corner of Norell Ave. N. and 60th St. N.)

Palmer Station—13 single family houses—Oak Cove N. (off of Oak Park Blvd. N.)

Public Storage Expansion—5710 Memorial Ave. N.

If you are interested in learning about what is coming or happening, please contact the City at 651.439.4439.

# Apply Online! 2020 Census Jobs

## Recruiting Assistant Positions

- ✓ Excellent Pay
- ✓ Flexible Hours
- ✓ Paid Training
- ✓ Temporary Positions

Are you up for the challenge?

## Recruiting Assistants Be A Part of History!

Help us get the word out about 2020 Census jobs. Call on local organizations to request assistance in providing information about jobs to the people they serve. Answer questions from the public about jobs, qualifications, and how to apply. Conduct formal and informal presentations about 2020 Census jobs.

For more information visit:

**2020census.gov/jobs**  
**1-855-JOB-2020**  
(1-855-562-2020)

Federal Relay Service: (800) 877-8339 TTY / ASCII  
[www.gsa.gov/fedrelay](http://www.gsa.gov/fedrelay)

The Federal Relay Service provides telecommunications services to allow individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, and/or have speech disabilities to conduct official business with and within the federal government.

The U.S. Census Bureau is an Equal Opportunity Employer

United States™  
**Census**  
Bureau

Form D-443  
September 2018

United States™  
**Census**  
2020

# City of Oak Park Heights

14168 Oak Park Blvd N  
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## City of Oak Park Heights

14168 Oak Park Blvd. N.  
Oak Park Heights, MN 55082  
Phone: 651-439-4439  
Fax: 651-439-0574

Police non-emergency: 651-439-4723  
Police Emergency: 911

Office Hours:  
Monday through Friday  
8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
excluding legal holidays

### MAYOR

Mary McComber: 351-7879

### COUNCILMEMBERS

Chuck Dougherty: 491-0419  
Mike Liljegren: 351-2742  
Mike Runk: 439-5458  
Mark Swenson: 270-5385

### COUNCILMEMBER ELECT

Carly Johnson: 651-261-5801

### CITY ADMINISTRATOR

Eric Johnson

Visit our Website!

[www.cityofoakparkheights.com](http://www.cityofoakparkheights.com)

*The Oak Park Heights  
newsletter  
is published by the City  
of Oak Park Heights.  
Comments are welcome.  
651-439-4439*

## City of Oak Park Heights

Winter 2018 Newsletter

### CITY PARKS

Oak Park Heights has six beautiful parks with many amenities. Take the time to familiarize yourself with the park and trails.

Some features include a rentable park shelter with a kitchen at Autumn Hills Park, baseball and soccer fields at Brekke Park, a pleasure skating rink at Cover Park, multiple picnic pavilions at Oak Park Crossing Park, a pickle ball court at Swager Park, and extensive woodlands and prairies at Valley View Park. Also, be sure to check out the disc golf course at Brekke Park and the new mountain biking trail at Valley View Park.

Visit the City's website or stop by City Hall for a Park and Trail Guide.

### CITY HALL MAILING ADDRESS CHANGE

City Hall has transitioned from using a Post Office box to having our mail delivered to our offices. For future correspondence, please send mail to 14168 Oak Park Boulevard North. We no longer receive mail addressed to the Post Office box.

