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Gift Certificates Sales Grow Dramatically in 2010 for Downtown Oak Park

Oak Park - Jan. 11, 2011 - Downtown Oak Park set new records for the sales of gift certificates good for local Downtown Oak Park businesses, with sales up +60% versus a year ago. This increase follows a national trend. Across the country, gift-card sales [rose during the holiday season](#) and five percent overall in 2010, helping post-Christmas retail sales and signaling a broader resurgence in consumer spending.

Pat Zubak, executive director of Downtown Oak Park, said she believed DTOP outpaced the national average in gift certificate growth for three reasons: having the right business mix, convenience, and a strong “shop local” marketing emphasis.

“We offer a terrific mix of unique local retailers, restaurants and favorite national chains. And it’s easier than ever to buy Downtown Oak Park gift certificates. Not only can shoppers buy them at the Visit Oak Park visitor center, but they can also now buy them online at downtownoakpark.net,” said Zubak.

Zubak added, “I also think that the message to ‘shop local’ really resonates with Oak Park shoppers. We reinforce that bias with the highly successful Shopper’s Reward program that actually pays people to keep their dollars in Downtown Oak Park.”

“The locals are coming out in droves,” said Holly Hansen-Mrozek, Director of Operations for the Visit Oak Park! shop, which sells the majority of the gift certificates and implements the Shopper’s Reward program. “Customers are telling us that they are thrilled to not have to drive to Oak Brook to find the perfect gift for everyone on their list, including teachers, coaches and friends.”

For more information please visit the Downtown Oak Park website (www.downtownoakpark.net) or call Pat Zubak at 708 383 4145.

About Downtown Oak Park: Downtown Oak Park offers an exceptional array of shops, restaurants, a state-of-the-art seven-screen movie theater and an exciting year-round schedule of promotions and special events. The district offers shoppers the convenience of numerous professional and personal service businesses, a central location, a public transportation center

and plenty of parking. The district is located right off I-290, or at the Harlem stop on the CTA Green Line, and at the Oak Park stop on the Metra Union Pacific West Line.

- **Right Retail Mix:** The following retailers opened their doors in Downtown Oak Park in the past year: Careful Peach Boutique, Gem Jewelry Boutique, Sugarcup Trading, Knot Just Knits, Fannie May, Muse, and Croix. New food establishments include Aripo's Venezuelan, Delia's Kitchen, and Potbelly Sandwich Shop.
- **Gift Certificates:** The Downtown Oak Park gift certificates can be redeemed at over 75 businesses, including local gems like the Lake Theatre, Marion Street Grille, Takara and the Book Table, as well as Oak Park branches of national or regional chains such as Old Navy, Borders and Bar Louie.
- **Shopper's Reward Program:** Between November 1 and December 25, shoppers were asked to keep their receipts. Those people buying at least \$25 across seven stores and a total of \$400 earned \$50 in coupons to be used from January 1-February 15 in Downtown Oak Park, normally a quiet time for retailers.

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Downtown Oak Park's mission is to create and support a thriving and vibrant business environment in Downtown Oak Park