

A vibrant, stylized illustration of a diverse crowd of people of various ages, ethnicities, and styles. The crowd is composed of many individuals, some smiling, some looking forward, and others with unique features like a woman with bunny ears or a man with a beard. The style is reminiscent of a comic book or a graphic novel, with bold outlines and a rich color palette. The crowd is the background for the entire page, with a red rectangular overlay on the right side containing the title and subtitle.

down town

OAK PARK

**ANNUAL REPORT
2022**

A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

May 2023

2022 marked a new chapter for Downtown Oak Park. We were required to reexamine our identity in response to an evolving community – from changes in the skyline and streetscape to changes in the business mix and consumer behaviors. A need to redefine our purpose and refresh our brand became apparent. Embracing a new mindset, we embarked on a journey to bring a freshness to DTOP to reflect and align with a new landscape. A goal was set to reposition our offerings to accommodate the new needs, habits, concerns & values of our community.

In April 2022 we launched We Are DTOP. This campaign focused on a brand voice & website copy reset to redefine the organization to DTOP membership and the greater Oak Park community. We were motivated to improve the understanding of the value of membership and how DTOP (and its funding) works for merchants and property owners. Catchy, creative eblasts were sent out regularly to re-engage a connection with our community. Please read our full recap of this wonderful campaign on page 6.

DTOP is entering a new era with new ways of connecting commerce, community & culture. We strive to reflect the inclusivity and sustainability that make the DTOP community unique, while continuing to develop the best practices of an outstanding downtown business district. We are committed to supporting the “old” programs & businesses that remain the backbone of the district while opening to the “new” energy.

We walk this direction with the confidence and support of our board of directors. Our board is seeing a revitalization with community leaders wanting to play a larger part in the Downtown Oak Park community. Many are responding to a call to connect with community on a new level –whether regularly dining downtown, visiting our events, joining the board, or becoming a member. We’re committed to stepping up to the call to serve this diverse and vibrant district in the heart of Oak Park.

Mike Fox
Board Vice President
Downtown Oak Park

EVENTS/PROMOTIONS

- Our digital **Valentine's Day Gift Guide** was published on February 3. The e-blast, social media and advertising campaign highlighted more than 45 gift ideas and menu specials from 15 DTOP shops and restaurants. The vibrant digital display is a Merchant Advisory Committee favorite with results of 1,165 opens.
- **Jazz Thaw** returned on Saturday, March 12 with new event hours from 1-10pm. In partnership with 90.9 WDCB, event participants were welcome to enjoy free live music performances inside 12 local restaurants with the option to order from the host restaurant's menu.
- Downtown Oak Park's popular **Thursday Night Out** kicked off in June. The yearly event features a free music concert series and dine-around program. Dine-around booklets were available to purchase at a tent located at Lake and Marion on Thursday nights from 5-9pm. 19 restaurants offered specials on the TNO menu. Marion Street was closed to vehicle traffic, and we had tables and chairs set up each Thursday for the community. The event also featured a beer & wine tent hosted by Downtown Oak Park restaurants. A total of 7,838 TNO books were sold this year which is comparable to the pre-Covid TNOs (7,469 in 2019 and 7,822 in 2018). However, the total dollar amount of \$195,950 is much higher because the TNO books were \$25 this year vs \$20 in past years.
- **Shop Outdoor Sale** returned offering end-of-season sales at select businesses on July 14-17 in Downtown Oak Park & Hemingway District businesses.
- **Oaktoberfest** returned after a two year hiatus.
 - The Kids' Root Beer Garden featured balloon artists & face painting, zucchini races, craft their own alpine caps, instruments, scarves, bubbles, big parachute, "Decorate your bike" table & much more.
 - 12 DTOP restaurants participated as food vendors offering delicious fall festival menu items.
 - Beer & Wine tent volunteer groups; Beyond Hunger on Friday night, Seven Generations Ahead on Saturday night – were pleased with tips collected during Oaktoberfest.
 - We increased the drink ticket price from \$8 to \$10 & mug cost from \$25 to \$30.
 - Oak Park Place & Byline Bank event sponsors provided \$4,000 total in sponsorship.

Oaktoberfest	BUDGET	2022	2019	2018
Revenue	\$97,300	\$117,762	\$92,344	\$108,425
Expenses (estimated)	\$90,000	\$113,889	\$92,284	\$100,047
Net	\$7,300	\$3,873	\$60	\$8,377

Thursday Night Out (as of 8/31/22)	JUN-AUG 2022	JUN-AUG 2021	MAY-AUG 2019	MAY-AUG 2018
Books Sold	7,838	5,471	7,469	7,822
Revenue	\$195,950	\$109,420	\$149,380	\$156,440



EVENTS/PROMOTIONS, CONTINUED

SHOPPER'S REWARD PROGRAM

Promotion Details:

1. Save your receipts when you support a Downtown Oak Park business between November 1 and December 25, 2022. Pick up your Shopper's Reward envelopes at participating DTOP businesses to keep track of collected receipts. It has never been easier!
 - Take-out & delivery receipts accepted – don't forget, you might have to ask for your receipt
 - Online shopping email receipts accepted
 - Gift Certificates receipts accepted (excluding Downtown Oak Park gift certificates)
2. Receive \$50.00 in Shopper's Reward certificates by spending \$25.00 or more at least seven participating businesses with a grand total of \$500 or more.
3. Spend your Shopper's Reward certificates at participating businesses. Reward certificates must be used between January 1 and March 15, 2023.

Shopper's Reward Program	2022	2021
Rewards given	1,234	1,213
Value	\$61,700	\$60,650

HOLIDAYS

Winterfest Cookie Walk

Saturday, December 2, 10am-3pm

- We sold 500 \$25 Cookie tins online (Price increased from \$20 in 2022); sold out in November.
- 35 businesses participated in handing out an individually wrapped treat at their business.
- Byline Bank sponsorship of \$1500, included their logo on cookie walk tin

Event Details:

- Catch a glimpse of Saint Nicholas.
- Enjoy carolers and choirs.
- Free holiday movie at Lake Theatre.
- Warm up inside the hospitality tent on Marion Street, south of Lake Street with free hot chocolate and coffee provided by Whirlwind Coffee Company.
- Participate in Downtown Oak Park's annual Cookie Walk – a \$25 (+ \$1 processing fee) participation fee includes a souvenir cookie tin and individually wrapped cookies to collect at participating businesses.

Home For The Holidays

Saturday, December 16, 10am-4pm

- Horse-drawn sleigh rides returned for the first time since 2019.
- Home for the Holidays featured:
 - Hot Chocolate Walk inside participating businesses
 - Visit from Santa
 - Carolers & Choirs



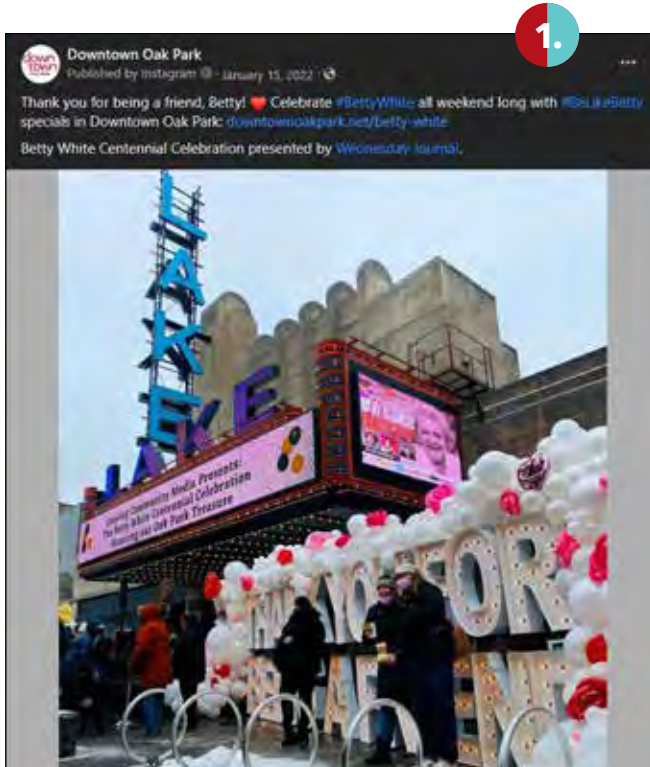
WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA

2022 TOP 3 FB POSTS (BY REACH)

1. Thank you for being a friend, Betty! (1/15/22)
Reach: 19,335 | Likes and Reactions: 766
2. Sip, Sizzle & Swing! (2/23/22)
Reach: 13,878 | Likes and Reactions: 296
3. Enjoy #BeLikeBetty specials all weekend long! (1/14/22)
Reach: 13,471 | Likes and Reactions: 321

2022 TOP 3 FB POSTS (BY LIKES AND REACTIONS)

1. Thank you for being a friend, Betty! (1/15/22)
Likes & Reactions: 766
2. Lease negotiations are underway for Dom's Kitchen & Market... (8/16/22)
Likes and Reactions: 389
3. Celebrate the changing seasons in Downtown Oak Park at Oaktoberfest 2022... (7/8/22)
Likes and Reactions: 384

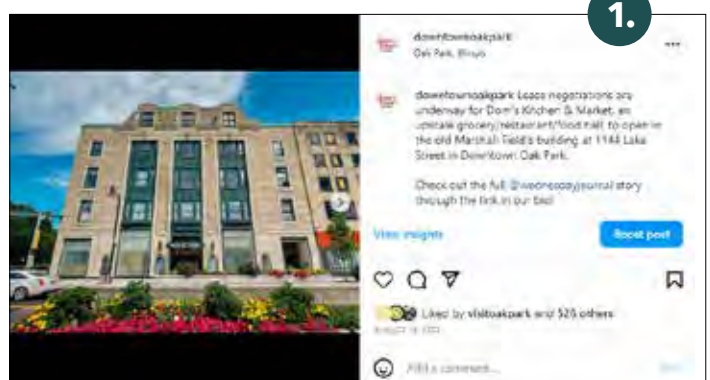
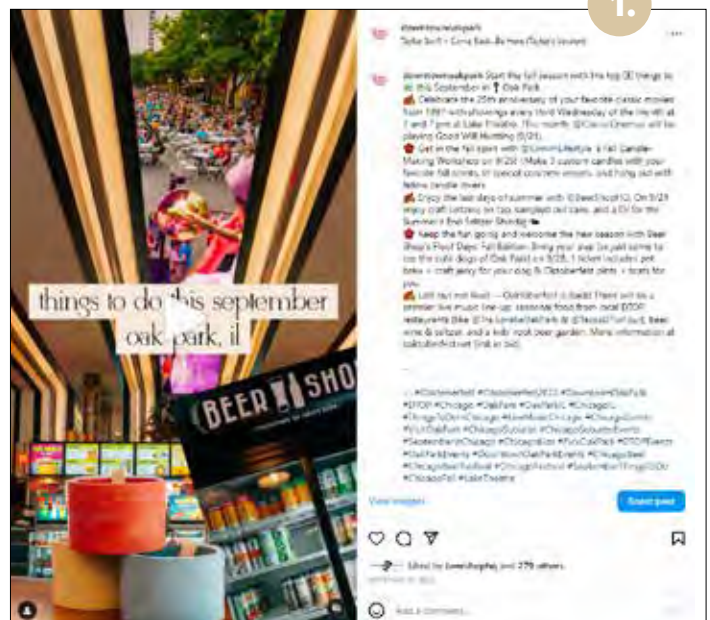


2022 TOP 3 INSTAGRAM POSTS (BY REACH)

1. Start the fall season with the top 5 things to do this September... (9/13/22)
Reach: 6,720 | Likes and Reactions: 280
2. Things To Do In Oak Park This August (8/2/22)
Reach: 5,281 | Reactions, Comments, and Shares: 365
3. Lease negotiations are underway for Dom's Kitchen & Market... (8/16/22)
Reach: 4,291 | Reactions, Comments, and Shares: 527

2022 TOP 3 INSTAGRAM POSTS (BY LIKES & REACTIONS)

1. Lease negotiations are underway for Dom's Kitchen & Market... (8/16/22)
Likes and Reactions: 527
2. Thank you for being a friend, Betty! (1/15/22)
Likes and Reactions: 483
3. sweetgreen Oak Park (1143 Lake Street) opens on Thursday, July 7! (6/29/22)
Likes and Reactions: 391



WE ARE DOWNTOWN OAK PARK CAMPAIGN

Downtown Oak Park implemented the general marketing campaign, We Are DTOP, in 2022 to better define the organization to members and the community.

Membership Matters Our annual membership drive began in early May with two versions of a membership letter targeted to both current members and non-members. The role of the organization and member benefits were clearly defined and outlined. A QR code was placed in the letter directing potential members to apply online. Swag bags filled with special gifts, a membership card and decal were given out to members. One-on-one visits, phone calls and personalized notes were written to members and property owners to rebuild the Downtown Oak Park business community.

To streamline our online resource for members we worked to redesign the member resource hub on our website. Members can go online and very quickly understand member benefits, pay their membership fee, and learn about who DTOP is.

We are pleased to report that DTOP membership has increased from 41 members to 64 for 2022.

Do you know DTOP? A refreshed monthly e-newsletter was sent from the Executive Director to members and SSA #1 property owners beginning May 2022. The goal of the e-newsletter was to inform, introduce & educate. Topics included merchant support, organizational education and community building. The updated communication strategy saw an increase in open rates and engagement.

DTOP of the Morning These community-focused, weekly e-blasts were sent out every Monday to our list of more than 5,000 email subscribers beginning April 2022. A fresh brand voice offered educational, informative “fast facts” to expand the We Are DTOP general marketing message. Each e-blast featured a main topic, educational theme, and business promotions and highlights. We saw a consistent increase in open and click-thru rates.

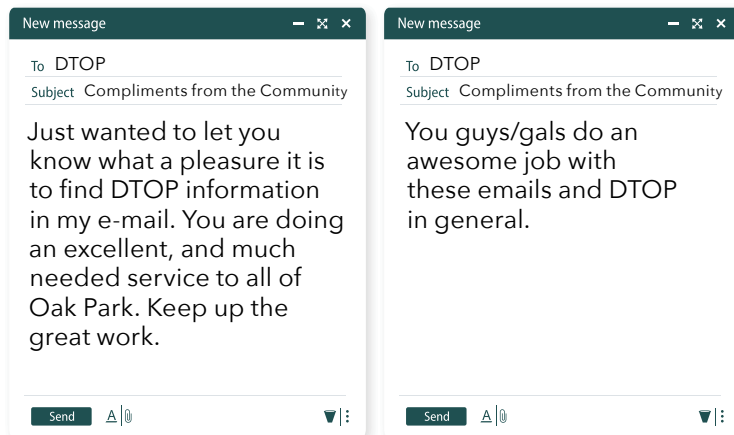


Hello, We ARE DTOP

- Refreshed website messaging on ABOUT DTOP web page: www.downtownoakpark.net/dtopba
- Highlights What DTOP Does: Business Development, Beautification & Landscaping, Events, Promotions, Member Resources etc.
- Who We Are - Staff & Board
- Boundary Map
- Subscribe to Eblast link



COMPLIMENTS FROM THE COMMUNITY



EMAIL BLAST OPEN RATE & CLICKS**General**

- Emails currently in database: 5,545
- Open Rate for all Emails: 43%

Stats for 2022 DTOP of the Morning eblasts:

- 188,963 Sent; 72,971 Opened
- Open Rate for eblasts: 42.49%

A. Top Email of 2022:

- August 29: 6,047 Sent; 2,670 Opened;
Open Rate 48.8%; Click Rate 2%

Stats for 2022 Did You Know? Merchant emails:

- 927 Sent; 536 Opened
- Open Rate for eblasts: 61.83%

B. Top DYK Email of 2022:

- November 18: 151 Sent; 89 Opened;
Open Rate 65%; Click Rate 1%

**We Are DTOP Outreach**

- Ads: Answer Book Ad, WJ digital & pop-up Ads, Residential lobby screens, WJ eblast
- Created a 2022 event postcard with We Are DTOP section inserted in WJ & distributed around DTOP
- Pop-up on website to collect email addresses
- Collected email addresses at TNO – increased email collection by 10% (500 new on top of 5000 existing) in a few short months during TNO.
- Updated Welcome eblast sent to new subscribers to feature We Are DTOP content
- Social Media plan to share We Are DTOP content
- TNO Book Ad on back of cover handed out in Oak Park Place lobby, planning to set-up at other rental developments
- Wednesday Journal Answer Book Ad

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CONNECTING WITH DTOP RESIDENTS

- Connected with property managers
- Handed out We Are DTOP educational & event postcards in lobbies
- Thursday Night Out & Oaktoberfest discount promotions & giveaways
- Gave out free hot cocoa along with Shopper's Reward Program & holiday event information
- Graphic displays promoted our happenings on lobby rotating TV screens
- Developed *Around Downtown* newsletter, digital and physical copies highlighting Top Things To Do in OP + other DTOP happenings & business events and promotions

AROUND DOWNTOWN

OCTOBER IN OAK PARK

FEATURED EVENTS

FREE FLOW WEEK WITH YOGA SIX

October 6th – 9th | Various times

First time visitors receive three FREE classes! To celebrate the one year anniversary of Yoga Six enjoy daily refreshments, raffle prizes, giveaways, special classes & member appreciation!

Book online at YogaSix.com/location/oak-park

ARTISAN NITE @ Beer Shop

October 5th | 5 – 8 p.m.

Enjoy local artisans, a DJ and beer from local Nitelglow Brewery.

DOG COSTUME PAWTY

@ Beer Shop | Oct. 26 | 5 – 7 p.m.

Enter your dog in a costume competition (no ticket needed) or buy a ticket for Floof Days and get 1 larger pint, 1 pet brew + a themed goodie bag

YOUR FALL CHECKLIST

- ☒ SHOP FALL ARRIVALS AT **JAYNE BOUTIQUE** WITH NEW STYLES DAILY
- ☒ TRY **CINNAMON SUGAR KETTLE CORN & PUMPKIN ICE CREAM** FROM WELLS STREET POPCORN
- ☒ GET READY FOR THE HOLIDAYS WITH THE **TEN THOUSAND VILLAGES ORNAMENT SALE** OCT 7-9
- ☒ ENJOY A **SPICED CIDER** OR **SWEET POTATO LATTE** FROM DOLLOP COFFEE CO

RESIDENT DISCOUNTS

just for you

EINNIM

USE CODE "OFRS15"

FOR 15% OFF YOUR PURCHASE

MENTION THAT YOU ARE
A HIGH-RISE RESIDENT AND
GET COFFEE + PASTRY FOR \$5

DOLLOP

STRIDE

50% OFF RESIDENTS'
UNLIMITED MEMBERSHIP

ENJOY A FREE 3-DAY
MEMBERSHIP TO FFC!
REDEEM THIS SPECIAL AT
FFC.COM/LIVING-LOCAL

FFC OAK PARK

Experience all that DTOP has to offer

- We also offered merchants new ways to reach OPRFHS students.

GROUNDS AND MAINTENANCE

LANDSCAPING

DTOP contracted with Woodlawn's Landscape Company for the fifth year in a row to install beautiful Cordyline red sister, Coleus redhead, Coleus inferno Begonia and Setcreasea for spring/summer in the 94 containers throughout the district. These plantings are chosen due to their ability to grow in sun or shade. Woodlawn's also filled all our planter beds on Lake Street and Marion Street with an innovative mix of seasonal annuals and perennials bringing our district into full bloom.

SNOW REMOVAL

In 2020 we re-negotiated a three-year snow removal contract with McAdams Landscaping. The contract is based on a percentage of snowfalls within a winter season; the less snowfall the less we pay. We were fortunate this past season to have had a light snowfall. DTOP contracts for snow removal along all sidewalks in our district and for the creation of "cut-throughs" along Lake Street, as well as in snow embankments between parking stalls and curb lines to further improve accessibility to pay terminals. DTOP plans for and budgets for complete snow removals every year. In the event there is a large snowfall during the holiday season, we would be able to remove all the snow to enable visitors to access the district.

HOLIDAY DÉCOR

- The district came to life again this year as all the boxwoods on Lake Street and 18 trees on Marion, Westgate and North Boulevard were adorned with alternating soft white and cool white LED lights.
- Large custom seasonal décor pieces from Artistic Holiday Décor added spectacular ambiance to Lake Street this year since the new trees were too young to be lit. They embellished the street with twinkling red, silver and gold soft lights.
- Winter greens accented with white and silver birch branches, white vine balls with sugar cones and berry spike white spray were installed in 22 containers in all the main intersections of Downtown Oak Park. Evergreen boughs were filled in the five raised planters along Lake Street near Harlem.
- The Marion St. archway and 78 light poles throughout the district were adorned with Frazier fir roping and clear white LED lights.
- On top of the 12 tall light poles lining Lake St. we placed seasonal holiday décor pieces to bring height to the holiday glow.

FALL DÉCOR

Corn stalks with orange ribbon were installed on all the lamp posts throughout the district to add to the fall ambiance.

HELP FOR THE HOMELESS

DTOP remains active on the Homelessness Coalition. The Coalition is made up of community stakeholders, Village staff and police working together to bring Homelessness to an end in our community. The coalition also handles issues around panhandling and the best ways to help eliminate the problem.

BANNER PROGRAM

For over 10 years Downtown Oak Park has been choosing a local artist to create three custom art pieces, each of which reflects different vignettes of the district and captures the overall "spirit" of DTOP. Each banner is sponsored by an individual business, displaying their name at the bottom. In 2021 we began offering a 40% discount to DTOP members. In 2022 over 20 businesses purchased banners.

COMMITTEE PARTNERSHIP AND SPONSORSHIP

Downtown partners with and supports local organizations through various events and sponsorships.

- Wright Plus Housewalk
- Seven Generations Ahead
- Festival Theatre
- The Village of Oak Park
- Infant Welfare Society Holiday Housewalk
- Green Community Connections Film Festival
- Historical Society of Oak Park River Forest
- OPALGA
- Oak Park River Forest Chamber of Commerce
- Hemingway District
- Pleasant District



2022 FINANCIALS

Income

Special Service Area Funds	\$725,000
Program Income (Events)	\$141,004
VOP Plant Agreement	\$25,000
Holiday Lighting/Décor	\$5,000
Member Dues	\$3,900
Street Pole Banners	\$2,650
Interest	\$298
Miscellaneous	\$1,579

Total Income

\$904,431

Expenses

Operating & Administration	\$346,480
Marketing	\$341,445
Grounds	\$173,780
Member Services and Programs	\$19,527

Total Expenses

\$881,231

Net Revenue

\$23,199

Bank Balances as of 12/31/22

Operating Accounts	\$20,653
Reserve Account	\$236,460
Snow Reserve Account	\$68,116

Total Cash

\$325,229

2022 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Eric Wagner, Owner/Merchant Director – President

Judith Lalor, Merchant Director – Vice President

Jeff Long, Merchant Director – Treasurer

Susie Goldschmidt, Merchant Director – Secretary

Jimmy Chen, Merchant Director

Paul Beckwith, Owner Director

Erin Payton, Owner/Merchant Director

Mike Carney, Owner Director

Eric Mazelis, OPEDC Representative

Tammie Grossman, VOP Representative

Terry Wilson, Merchant Director

Mike Fox, Owner Director

Dave Schrodtt, Counsel

DTOP STAFF

Shanon Williams, Executive Director

Anna Kosowski, Marketing Director

Mary Icenogle, Marketing & Communications Manager

Jeff Eng, Finance Manager

COMMITTEES

MERCHANT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The MAC is comprised of Merchant Members and makes recommendations to the Board of Directors in general regarding promotional activities and grounds maintenance in SSA #1.

Lita Wilmes, Einnim

Jonathan Kaufman, Wells Street Popcorn

David Fletcher, Wheel & Sprocket

Officer Michael Kelly

Erin Van Buskirk, JAYNE Boutique

Jimmy Chen, Poke Burrito

Michelle Vanderlaan, Sugarcup Trading and 16 Suitcases

Nina McCaffrey, Polished Nails and Day Spa

Steve Qi, Sushi House

FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Finance Committee meets quarterly. This group oversees and manages the finances for the organization as well as the annual audit. They meet annually with the Village Manager to present the budget for approval.

Jeff Eng, Finance Manager

Jeff Long, Fitness Formula Club

Eric Wagner, Visit Oak Park

Mike Fox, R.P. Fox & Associates

Susie Goldschmidt, Byline Bank

Mary Ludgin, Shops of Downtown Oak Park/Heitman

Judith Lalor, The Little Gem Cafe

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE:

The Governance Committee is responsible for increasing and sustaining the capacity of the board to provide the leadership necessary to achieve the organization's mission. They take the lead and responsibility for board development, leadership development, board assessment and board education. They ensure that the board is equipped with proper guidelines and structure to do its work most effectively.

Erin Payton

Eric Wagner

Judith Lalor

David Schrodtt

2022 NEW BUSINESSES

Harold's Shrimp and Chicken - 1023 Lake St.

Amazing Lash Studio - 477 N. Harlem Ave.

Dollop Coffee Co. - 149 Forest Ave.

Kyuramen - 118 N. Marion St.

Encore! by Little Gem - 189 N. Marion St.

My Salon Suite - 114 N. Marion St.

2023 NEW BUSINESSES

Smoothie King - 1010 Lake St.

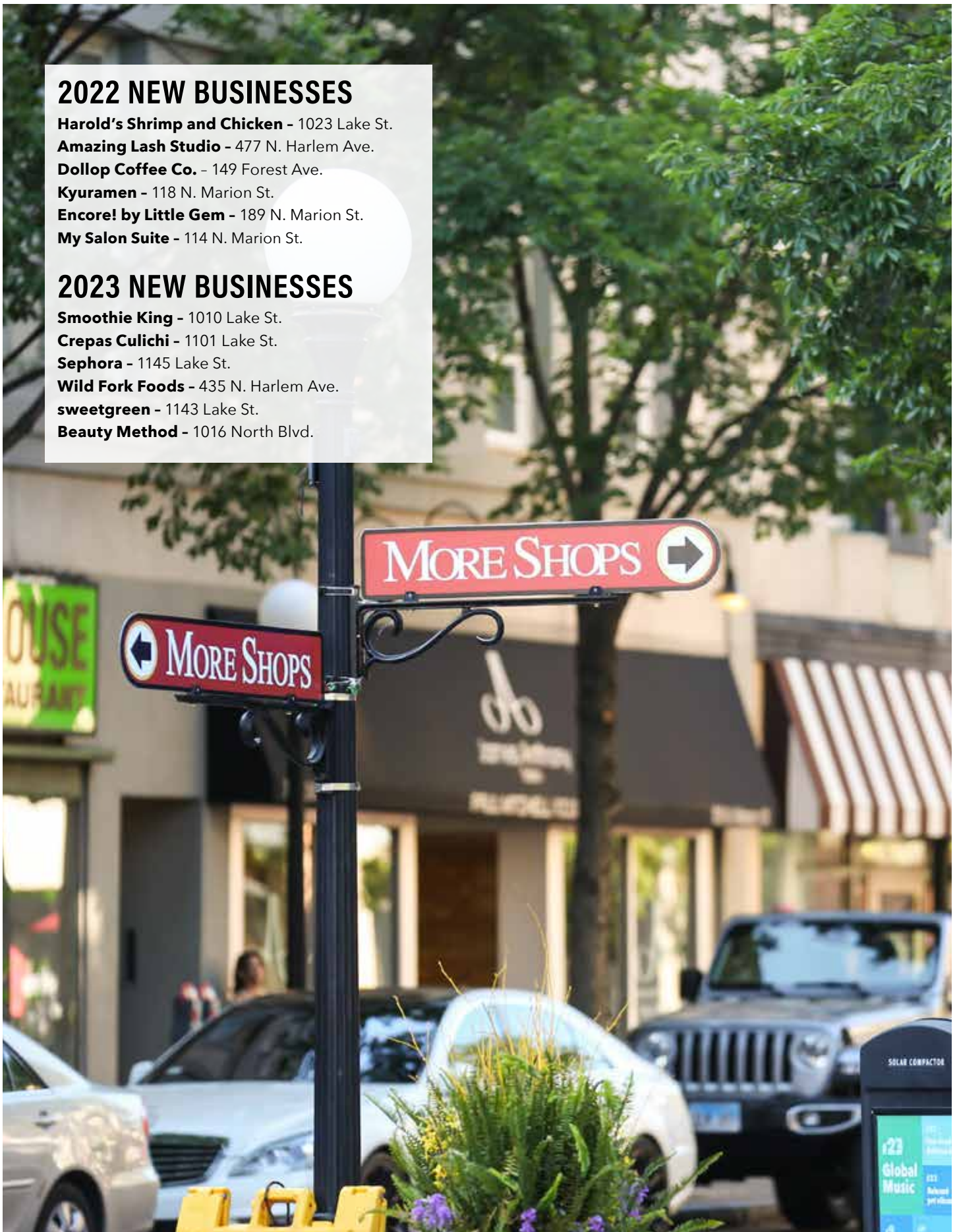
Crepas Culichi - 1101 Lake St.

Sephora - 1145 Lake St.

Wild Fork Foods - 435 N. Harlem Ave.

sweetgreen - 1143 Lake St.

Beauty Method - 1016 North Blvd.



down
town
OAK PARK

