

# SSMMA MATTERINGS

Fall 2008

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 Sheila Miller,  
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## IN MEMORY OF MAYOR MARK STRICKER AND FORMER MAYOR JOHN RITA

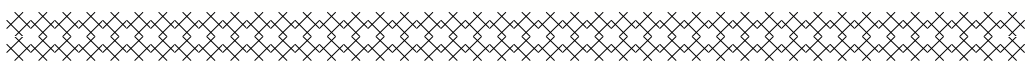
It is with great sadness that we note the passing of Mayor Mark Stricker of Matteson. Mayor Stricker served as SSMMA President in 1995-96 and currently chaired our Transportation Committee, as well as serving on the Executive Committee.

Mayor Stricker served his community of Matteson and the entire southern suburbs very well in his nearly 30 years of public service. He brought great wisdom, compassion and hard work to his role as mayor and regional leader.

In addition, Mayor Stricker was a great friend and mentor to many of us. From SSMMA, we express our deep condolences to Mark's wife Char, his family and the officials and residents of the Village of Matteson. He will always be remembered and sorely missed.

Former Mayor John Rita of Blue Island also passed away recently. He served as SSMMA President in 1984-85 and during his tenure as Mayor of Blue Island was very active in the CATS Council of Mayors, as well as other regional activities.

John Rita too was a great friend to many of us who served with him and we express our condolences to his wife Rose and to his son Representative Bob Rita, as well as his other family members.



## SSMMA Quarterly Open Dialogue Meeting

One recommendation coming out of SSMMA's Strategic Retreat Session earlier this year under the leadership of Mayor Dan Podgorski was the strong feeling that Mayors and Village Managers wanted the ability to discuss in more detail current items of interest without the constraint of an agenda with multiple items.

To that end, the Association's Executive Committee has created a quarterly open dialogue meeting with no formal agenda. To date, two of the sessions have been held with very positive reactions from the attendees.

The next open dialogue meeting will be held on Thursday, October 2, 2008 at 7:00 p.m. at the Association offices in East Hazel Crest. We encourage you to attend and bring with you a subject of interest to you and your community to discuss with other Mayors and Managers.

## 29<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL SSMMA GOLF OUTING

The South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who sponsored, participated and assisted in making this event a success.

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### TICKETS

Lighthouse Printing—Sue Kirschner

### MEMBER CONTRIBUTIONS

Village of East Hazel Crest  
Mayor Thomas A. Brown  
City of Oak Forest  
Mayor JoAnn M. Kelly  
Village of Orland Hills  
Mayor Kyle Hastings



CHICAGO SOUTHLAND  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
CORPORATION

At the Quarterly Economic Development Forum on August 1st in Tinley Park, we again had over 200 people who heard informative presentations about development opportunities in the Southland. The attendees were a cross section of the professions necessary to accomplish economic development. Many people came early for the continental breakfast and continued talking after the Forum closed. I have recently heard that these forums are enhancing the perception in the development community that the Southland region is ready to do business.


We are posting the PowerPoint presentations on our web site as we collect them. We have currently posted the presentation by Tracey Bosman from Grubb & Ellis at [http://www2.chicagosouthlandedc.org/wp-content/uploads/2008/08/ge\\_strategic\\_consult.pdf](http://www2.chicagosouthlandedc.org/wp-content/uploads/2008/08/ge_strategic_consult.pdf) and the presentation of the I-80 East Logistics Corridor Coalition key infrastructure projects by Michael Scholefield at <http://www2.chicagosouthlandedc.org/wp-content/uploads/2008/08/qf0808.ppt>. Please email Reggie Greenwood ([reggie.greenwood@ssmma.org](mailto:reggie.greenwood@ssmma.org)) any comments about the identified infrastructure projects.

For the first time, investors in the CSEDC had an opportunity to hand out information at the Economic Development Forum. We will continue this as another opportunity to provide marketing value to our investors. Please visit our web site to find links to financial institutions, environmental engineers, engineers, developers, legal firms, etc. who can help with a project in the Chicago Southland. If you haven't made an investment in CSEDC this year, please consider doing so. You can invest with a credit card on our web page: [www.chicagosouthlandedc.org](http://www.chicagosouthlandedc.org) or mail in a check with the investment form that is also on the web site. Please send us email addresses of any associates you feel would benefit from being part of our email list.


**Save the Date:** The next Quarterly Economic Development Forum will be the fourth Friday in October, the 24<sup>th</sup>, in Richton Park hosted by Mayor Richard Reinbold starting with a continental breakfast at 8:30. The featured development project will be:

4601 Sauk Trail is an 85,000 square foot, Class A office building located ½ mile east of Interstate Highway 57 in south suburban Richton Park, 10 minutes south of I-80 and only 45 minutes southwest of downtown Chicago. The building offers tenant's tremendous identity with more than 40,000 cars passing the development along Sauk Trail each day. An expanding, skilled work force, one of the hallmarks of the Chicago Southland region, is a key reason employers are focused on this area for relocation and expansion.

## Single Family Rehabilitation Program



SSMMA just received our Notice To Proceed and our allocation from Cook County to restart the Single Family Rehabilitation Program for our member communities. The communities that are served in this program are those communities who were members of the Chicago Southland Development, Inc (CSDI) Single Family Rehab Program. We will now be moving forward to create a listing of homes from the 13 member communities and restart the program.





# DIVERSITY, INC. NEWS



## Home Preservation Workshop

Diversity, Inc. and the South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association will present a "Homeownership Preservation Seminar". This is the second of two seminars and is scheduled for Saturday, September 20, 2008 starting at 9:00 a.m. at 1906 W. 174<sup>th</sup> Street in East Hazel Crest and will end at approximately 1:00 p.m. The first seminar was held August 23<sup>rd</sup>. Joe Martin, Executive Director of the intergovernmental organization Diversity, Inc., said that with the vast amount of state and federal resources dedicated to the mortgage foreclosure crisis, that south Cook County has not received a proportionate share. He added that this is why we are partnering with the Regional Fair Housing Center, located in Evergreen Park, to bring these programs to our communities.

Jim Shannon of the Regional Fair Housing Center said that of the seminars, we present a comprehensive program. Mr. Shannon added that we have legal experts that will explain default or missed mortgage payments, repayments or workout plans, and default or foreclosure judgments. Mr. Shannon added that they also have mortgage and real estate professionals who would cover establishing grace periods to bring mortgages current; forbearance agreements; mortgage modification; refinancing; partial claim and other items.

Martin noted that participants should come to the seminar prepared to provide detailed information about their loan, their lender and mortgage servicer. Mr. Shannon said that his program goes well beyond the initial seminar and that the counselors available will work with homeowners to assist in their recovery from default or foreclosure. Reservations are required as space is limited. Please contact Diversity, Inc. at (708) 922-4603.

Ed Paesel, Executive Director of the South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association, noted that the issue of mortgage foreclosure is catastrophic to so many south suburban families and to the communities where foreclosures occur. Mr. Paesel pointed out that municipal budgets are being strained by the additional work caused by vacant or abandoned properties which require extra public safety, code enforcement, and legal services. Joe Martin added that over the long term these homes detract value from the housing stock and eventually will impact the municipality's tax base.

Diversity, Inc. requests any South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association member community or Diversity, Inc. community that would like to offer this seminar to their residents contact him at (708) 206-1204. He will provide information available for use in promoting the program.

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## THE FORECLOSURE CRISIS DIVERSITY, INC. ADDRESSES THE ISSUE

The South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association (SSMMA) is an intergovernmental agency providing technical assistance and joint services to 42 municipalities representing a population over 650,000 in southern Cook and eastern Will Counties. This region of the Chicago metropolitan area is among the most affordable in terms of housing costs. Our culturally diverse residential population adds value to our quality of life and serves as an example for the rest of the region.

Diversity, Inc. is an affiliate of SSMMA specializing in fair housing and housing related issues.

The issue of mortgage foreclosure is not new to the southern suburbs. We have experienced increased foreclosure rates in the mid 1980's, the 1990's and today.

The sub-prime lending business is not necessarily bad. However, the last few years predatory mortgage lending has evolved in the sub-prime market. Predatory practices include misleading marketing, financing of high fees and frequent refinancing, creative financing with balloon payments, adjustable rates and interest only loans. We all have heard the commercials.

There are growing problems with the popular sub-prime adjustable rate mortgages or ARMs. Since 2005 foreclosure filings have grown to nearly 80 percent in 2007. The south suburbs ironically experienced one of the lowest rates of increase in mortgage foreclosures during this time period at 45.1%; northwestern Cook County was at an increase of 99% and western Cook County at 83%.

As an intergovernmental agency, we are concerned about our member municipalities. Our cities and villages, reliant upon the value of property in their communities, will begin to feel the pinch as more properties go uninhabited. Expenditures will increase for code enforcement and maintenance of the exterior of abandoned homes, staff time to track down banks and others who are responsible for the properties, and patrolling of properties so they do not become and "attractive nuisance" for mischief. A study by Harvard reveals that one foreclosed property can cost a local government between \$7,000 to \$35,000 to service.

The state and federal government have made resources available to deal with the crisis. However, few if any are directed to assist local government with their needs. These are not reaching our region in amounts commensurate with the needs in the south suburbs. Nevertheless we are moving ahead with plans to address this perplexing problem.

The State Treasurers office recently completed a workshop sponsored by Diversity, Inc. and SSMMA on mortgage foreclosure. Additionally, Diversity, Inc. has formed a "Bankers Advisory Committee" that is addressing the challenges of foreclosure. Diversity, Inc. is also seeking out resources to reach out to the member communities and their residents, assisting to inform them of their options. Diversity, Inc. is also scheduling "Mortgage Foreclosure" Seminars for the next several months in cooperation with another counseling agency.

This fall Diversity, Inc. and SSMMA will once again join together to bring a panel of experts together to learn what other municipalities, organizations and other states are doing to minimize the impact of this crisis on towns and their residents.

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### Diversity, Inc.

*Sustaining Diverse Communities*

#### **Foreclosure Prevention Help**

Are you having difficulty making your mortgage payment on time? Have your mortgage payments increased due to an interest rate adjustment? Have you made a late mortgage payment within the past six months? Take action now! Don't delay. There is help for you.

### **Free Home Ownership Preservation Seminar**

**Saturday – September 20, 2008**

**9:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.**

**Diversity, Inc.**

1906 W. 174<sup>th</sup> Street  
East Hazel Crest, Illinois

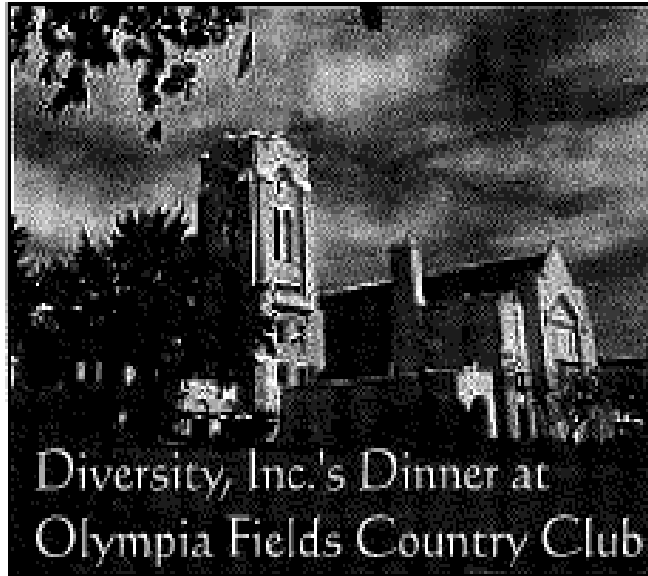
Presented in Cooperation with the  
**Regional Fair Housing Center &  
Homefree/USA**  
Registration Required

(708) 922-4603 Holly Campbell



SAVE THE DATE

September 24, 2008



## *Mark Your Calendar*

*Wednesday, September 24, 2008*

*Diversity, Inc.'s*

*13th Annual Dinner & Awards Ceremony*

*6:00 p.m.—9:00 p.m.*

*Olympia Fields Country Club*

*Tables of 10 \$600.00*

*Single Seating @ \$65.00 each*

# Household Hazardous Waste Collection



Saturday, October 11, 2008  
8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

(MWRD) Ridgeland Avenue  
Solid Management Area  
6200 W. 119<sup>th</sup> Street  
(119<sup>th</sup> & Ridgeland)  
Worth, IL

*An opportunity to dispose of household products that are harmful to your health and the environment!*

## Drop Off:

- ✓ Aerosol cans
- ✓ Anti-freeze
- ✓ Auto & boat batteries
- ✓ Cleaning products
- ✓ Drain Cleaners
- ✓ Fluorescent lamp bulbs
- ✓ Herbicides, insecticides & pesticides
- ✓ Hobby chemicals
- ✓ Household Batteries
- ✓ Lawn & garden chemicals
- ✓ Mercury
- ✓ Motor oil & gasoline
- ✓ Oil based paint & paint thinners
- ✓ Pool Chemicals
- ✓ Solvents and Strippers

## DO NOT drop off:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agricultural wastes</li> <li>Business wastes</li> <li>Fire extinguishers</li> <li>Gas Cylinders</li> <li>Latex paint</li> <li>Propane tanks</li> <li>Regular garbage</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ammunition</li> <li>Explosives</li> <li>Fireworks</li> <li>Institutional wastes</li> <li>Medical wastes</li> <li>Radioactive material</li> <li>Smoke detectors</li> </ul> |
|--|--|



Sponsored by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency and the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

## Congratulations and Welcome

We would like to congratulate two new City/Village Managers to the southern suburbs. John Marquart has been named the new City Manager in Oak Forest and Paul Grimes has been named Village Manager in Orland Park. We wish both managers the best and look forward to working with them.

### I-294/I-57 INTERCHANGE EA Public Hearing

One of the major transportation priorities of the Association and our communities has been the construction of an interchange at I-294 & I-57. Great progress has been made in the past year, but we must continue our strong advocacy for the project with the Legislature, the Governor, IDOT and the Illinois Tollway.

We encourage all to attend a public hearing on the Environmental Assessment for the project, sponsored by the Illinois Tollway. The hearing will be held on Wednesday, September 10, 2008 from 4:00-7:00 p.m. at the Posen City Hall Council Chambers, 2440 W. Walter Zimny Drive in Posen.



### South Suburban Association of Chiefs Of Police



An initial meeting was held with Chief Mike O'Connell to begin regular meetings between the Mayors and the Chiefs to work together on issues of mutual interest and benefit to our communities. Several issues discussed at the original meeting were with regard to potential ordinances, problems at the courthouses with new regulations and development of local policies.

### Recycle Used Rechargeable Batteries and Cell Phones

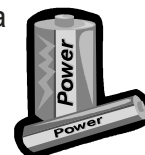


AT&T, Black & Decker, Circuit City, Home Depot, Lowe's, Office Depot, OfficeMax, RadioShack, Remington Product Company, Sears, Staples, Target, U.S. Cellular and Verizon Wireless are some retailers who accept rechargeable batteries. Rechargeable batteries are commonly found in cordless power tools, cellular and cordless phones, laptop computers, digital cameras, two-way radios, camcorders and remote control toys.

Common household batteries such as 9-volt, D, C, AA and AAA are used for flashlights, toys, radios and other devices and can be taken to most Radio Shack stores to be recycled.

Information on how and where to recycle Ni-cad rechargeable batteries can be found on the web site [www.rbrc.com](http://www.rbrc.com) or by calling 1-800-822-8837. Also visit [www.earth911.org](http://www.earth911.org) for assistance in determining items which can be recycled and where they can be recycled by entering a product name and your location.

You may want to call first to verify that your local store is a participating retailer.





## Transportation News



After a two month summer break from meeting, the Transportation Committee will resume their regular monthly meetings beginning Tuesday, September 9, 2008 at 2:00 p.m. at the Village of Matteson.

Although there have been no Committee meetings since our June meeting, activities have been ongoing. Since June another 7 projects have been let by IDOT bringing the total number of projects approved and scheduled for Program Year 2008 to 13 and an additional 5 LAPP projects are being amended, due to

higher asphalt costs, to be let and scheduled this Program Year. Among these approved projects was the Emergency Vehicle Pre-emption (EVP) project providing 18 member communities and 133 intersections with emergency control.

As we approach the end of the Program Year, we will continue to monitor the progress of not only the projects at the municipal and engineering level, but also as to the expediency of IDOT in processing these projects. It is our intent to use all of the allocated funds for our area before the end of Program Year 2009.



## PUBLIC WORKS ADVISORY COMMITTEE



Although the committee has taken its usual summer break and is not scheduled to meet again until the end of September, there are several major issues being addressed by the Public Works Committee.

Recently, a survey was sent to all of our members regarding the **Emerald Ash Borer** and how the individual municipalities are contemplating addressing the issue. It is the intent of the Committee to review all of the data submitted and determine if there would be an economically beneficial regional approach for the municipalities to join together in dealing with this problem.



Part of the solution will probably include the Robbins Power Plant, which will be looking for fuel to fire up their generators to produce electricity. A small subcommittee has been meeting to address these issues and necessary components to provide a successful region-wide plan. **However**, to complete the project, it is necessary to get the information from all of our communities, so if you have not already responded to the questionnaire, please do so now.

A meeting between the Councils of Government (COG's) took place in mid July to review and update the language in our **Intergovernmental Agreements** to incorporate necessary language referencing mandatory Homeland Security Regulations. As soon as the final language has been completed, copies will be made available to everyone. Also, it was mentioned that each COG should review and update its current equipment list and create an updated directors list with contact information.

Training, as always, is critical and continually being considered. Because of the response and need for the **CDL, Drug and Alcohol** training, a second class was conducted on July 22<sup>nd</sup> for approximately 30 public works employees from seven (7) communities who were unable to participate in the May session.

**NIMS 100 and 700** classes were available at South Suburban College again in August. The need to receive certification in these classes has become increasingly apparent. Those who have not taken the training will be notified of future classes when they become

available.

**Salt** and its availability at affordable prices has become the paramount issue facing our communities. At least ten (10) communities were not included in the CMS bidding process and those who were included were being offered salt at a price three times the amount they paid last year.

Obviously this is a major problem and we are looking into ways of making certain that all of our communities are taken care of to provide this vital public safety service. Alternative sources and commodities are being explored. A joint effort with other COG's is also underway since Lake, McHenry, Cook and Division 1 of IDOT have been subjected to this "shortage" of salt.

The state has indicated it is trying to find alternate sources of product to provide to the municipalities. However, the cost will be at a rate of \$145-\$165 per ton. This cost is probably prohibitive to many of our communities, so it is imperative that we continue to search for alternative sources.

For additional information on transportation or public works issues, contact Deputy Executive Director Bud Fleming at (708) 922-4677 or [bud.fleming@ssmma.org](mailto:bud.fleming@ssmma.org).

## AN OPEN LETTER TO SPRINGFIELD...

We are contacting you on behalf of the councils of government and the economic development groups actively pursuing an agenda of progress for Will, South, and Southwest Cook counties.

What we are currently facing is a very real challenge to economic survival confounded not only by threats external to Illinois, but, ironically, by the very elected and appointed offices sworn to protect the health, safety, and welfare working counter to their mandate.

In the area served by the Will County Governmental League, the Southwest Conference of Mayors, the South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association, the Will Center for Economic Development, and the Chicago Southland Economic Development Corporation:

- \* Five class 1 railroads;
- \* Six interstate highways;
- \* An extensive public transit network;
- \* Class 1 and 2 truck route system; and
- \* Working waterways connecting the inland river system to the Great Lakes...are at risk.



The opportunity this inter-connected/inter-related system represents, not only to the region, state and Midwest, but to our Nation, finds us literally at a crossroads...

Turn one way - through a concerted state capital program capable of addressing existing needs, future demands, while leveraging assets to compliment an infusion of federal funding in the upcoming transportation bill - and realize geometric growth in logistics, fabrication, and component assembly, and a consequently, a healthier, cleaner, more diverse economy that comes with it...or

Turn the other way - lack of meaningful action, under-investment, political one upsmanship and we are led down a path littered by an imploding economy and exodus of private investment capital.



Our bi-county task force has taken a leadership role in developing a list of key infrastructure projects critical to the success of our collective futures enlisting our unanimous support. Included among projects undoubtedly familiar to you, we offer in addition to the CREATE-based freight transportation project, inclusion of a similar investment in what is generally identified as the STAR line corridor - the circumferential freight line - for structural improvements in addressing congestion and public safety issues in relation to an anticipated increase commuter and freight traffic.

We strongly advocate for a proactive General Assembly and Governor to reach beyond self-imposed constraints by exceeding funding expectations through:

- \* the adoption of Senate Bill 2288 and its capital component;
- \* increased casino sites and introduction of track-based initiatives identified in House- sponsored proposals;
- \* proceeds of any realized increases in gambling by increasing sites and race track machines would be deposited in the State's general fund;
- \* all diversions from the motor fuel tax fund would be eliminated, said diversion re-instated to the state and local road programs;
- \* forward movement on lottery leasing legislation; and
- \* expanded privatization opportunities where appropriate.

We need to go beyond the zero sum game the State of Illinois continues to play.

We must address immediate needs, position for optimum federal commitment in the upcoming Surface Transportation Bill, and advance an infrastructure agenda that re-asserts Illinois' pre-eminence in national and international markets. On behalf of what is now designated District Ten (which, by the way, is still waiting for its Opportunity Returns Program), local and regional agencies stand ready to assist and



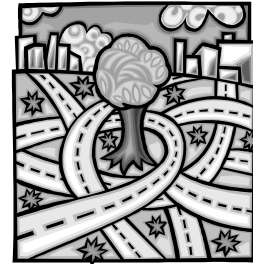
support.

And ladies and gentlemen we need to act and the time is now!

The South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association, the Will County Governmental League, the Southwest Conference of Mayors, the Chicago Southland Economic Development Corporation and the Will County Center for Economic Development have jointly agreed on mutual support for the following regionally significant projects which need to be included in a new State Capital Bill, as well as the new Federal Transportation Reauthorization.

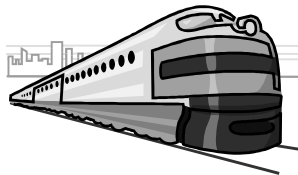
#### Highway

I-57/I-294 Interchange  
 Illiana Expressway  
 I-80 Add Lanes – Harlem to Joliet  
 U.S. 30 Add Lanes – Harlem to I-80  
 I-55 Add Lanes  
 I-394 Upgrade – I-80 to Goodenow Road  
 Illiana – Extend Westward to I-55



#### Rail

Southeast Metra Commuter Rail  
 STAR Corridor – Rail/Freight  
 Metra Electric Extension  
 CREATE



#### Air/Water

NE Illinois Locks/Channels  
 South Suburban Airport Land Acquisition



#### Local Interchanges

I-57 @ Stuenkel (new)  
 I-55 @ Arsenal Road



Our thanks to Chicago Southland EDC Chairman Mike Scholefield for coordinating this important cooperative effort.

## IMET CONTINUES TO PROVIDE STRONG RETURNS TO MEMBERS

Imet'S 1-3 Year Fund has performed exceptionally well over the last 12 months providing a net return to IMET members of 6.49% for the latest one-year period. IMET's Convenience Fund has provided a strong return over the last 12 months as well, with a net return to IMET members of 3.84% for the latest one-year period.

IMET's Funds offer safety, liquidity, and are approved for both operating and pension funds.

**The Illinois Metropolitan Investment fund (IMET)** was developed in July, 1996 as a cooperative endeavor to assist Illinois municipalities and public entities with the investment of their intermediate-term dollars. IMET was established as a not-for-profit investment fund under the Intergovernmental Cooperation Act of the Illinois Municipal Code and is sponsored by South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association. For more information: [www.investIMET.com](http://www.investIMET.com).

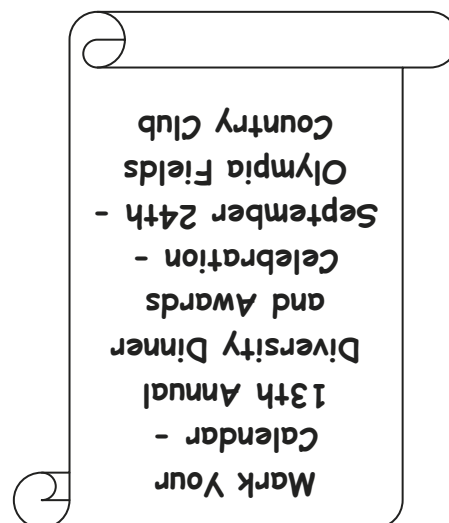
# Important Dates

September 9	Transportation Committee Meeting (Matteson Village Hall)
September 16	Diversity, Inc. Monthly Meeting (Association Offices)
September 18	SSMMA Dinner Meeting (Holiday Inn Select Hotel & Convention Center, 18501 S. Harlem Avenue, Tinley Park, IL)
September 24	Diversity Dinner & Awards Celebration (Olympia Fields Country Club)
October 2	Public Works Advisory Committee
October 7	Transportation Committee Meeting
October 11	Household Hazardous Waste Collection (119th & Ridgeland, Worth)
October 16	SSMMA Business Meeting (Association Offices)
October 23	Public Works Advisory Committee
November 11	Transportation Committee Meeting
November 18	Diversity, Inc. Monthly Meeting (Association Offices)
November TBD	Public Works Advisory Committee
November 27-28	SSMMA Offices Closed (Thanksgiving Holiday)
December 4	SSMMA Holiday Dinner Meeting (Midlothian Country Club, Midlothian)

For more information on these events please contact  
SSMMA at 708-206-1155 or [info@ssmma.org](mailto:info@ssmma.org)

SSMMATTERINGS Editor: Rita Kueny

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