

PAGE

2



Celebrate the season at this year's Old Fashioned Christmas – 2-5 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 10 at Plymouth Creek Park, 3625 Fernbrook Lane.

PAGE

3



Winter is creeping up, and with it comes the white stuff. Whether you love or loathe snow, know that the City of Plymouth stands ready to keep it off the roadways.



## Election ballot includes City Council seats

Three City Council seats are on the general election ballot. The ballot will include the following candidates:

### At Large (four-year term):

Nick Roehl

Jim Willis

### Ward 1, NW Plymouth (four-year term):

Judy Johnson

### Ward 3, SE Plymouth (four-year term):

Scott J. Aldrich

Jim Davis

To view the City Council candidate forum sponsored by the Wayzata-Plymouth League of Women Voters, visit the Channel 12 website at [twelve.tv/elections](http://twelve.tv/elections).

On election night, Nov. 8, Channel 12 News will begin coverage of local races in Plymouth and other northwest cities at 8 p.m. A live studio and on-location show featuring the election will begin at 9 p.m. on Channel 12.

In addition, results will be posted on the Secretary of State's website, [sos.state.mn.us](http://sos.state.mn.us), as they become available.

## Public safety emphasized in 2017 proposed budget

As 2016 wraps up, the Plymouth City Council prepares to make final adjustments to next year's budget, which currently includes an overall increase of about \$4.2 million – or 5.2 percent – from 2016.

A significant portion of the proposed bump can be attributed to additional funding for public safety personnel and equipment. Plymouth's population is growing quickly. In fact, more than 1,000 new homes have been built in the city since 2012. With the added population comes an increase in demand for police and fire services. The 2017 budget includes the addition of six full-time firefighters, which will help the city bolster daytime availability.



Budget ... continued on page 2

The City of Plymouth is nearing the final stages of preparing the 2017 budget, which includes an emphasis on funding for public safety services.

## Direct balloting and absentee voting are available prior to Nov. 8 general election

Election Day is Tuesday, Nov. 8 – polls will be open from 7 a.m. until 8 p.m. However, with the availability of direct balloting and absentee voting, voters need not wait until Election Day to cast a ballot.

Direct balloting begins Tuesday, Nov. 1, while absentee voting began Sept. 23. The general election includes races for school board, city, county, judicial, state and federal offices. The voting location for precinct 1 has changed since last election. Registered voters in that area received a notice specifying the new polling place.



Vote ... continued on page 2

Election Day is Tuesday, Nov. 8, but voters have options to cast a ballot early via direct balloting or absentee voting.

## Plymouth on Parade 2016



The 2016 Plymouth on Parade was a hit with attendees. Clockwise from top left: A member of the Twin Cities Unicycle Club works his way down Plymouth Boulevard. A girl enjoys a piece of candy from the parade. Post-parade events at the Hilde Performance Center included a giant slide and inflatable bouncers in addition to a number of interactive events.





## Budget ... from page 1

The Plymouth Fire Department closely monitors its response times, and staffing is adjusted accordingly to ensure quality service levels. The 2017 budget includes increased funding for paid-on-call firefighters, in addition to the new full-time positions.

Also included in the budget are two new police officer positions, which will help establish a fifth patrol district in the northwestern part of the city. In 2016, Plymouth planned for the addition of two police officers per year through 2018 to support the new patrol district.

“We are approaching the second year of our redesigned Public Safety Department,” said City Manager Dave

Callister. “The investments we’re making in public safety in the 2017 budget have been planned since the reworking of the department and will serve our growing population.”

## Sound Planning Maintains Quality

Plymouth has developed an extensive planning program for the city’s finances. Known as the 10-year financial plan, the outline forecasts the coming decade and includes revenue, expenditures, levies, growth and tax impact. With this tool, the city has been able to maintain a stable tax rate and avoid spikes in property taxes as the city grows and develops.

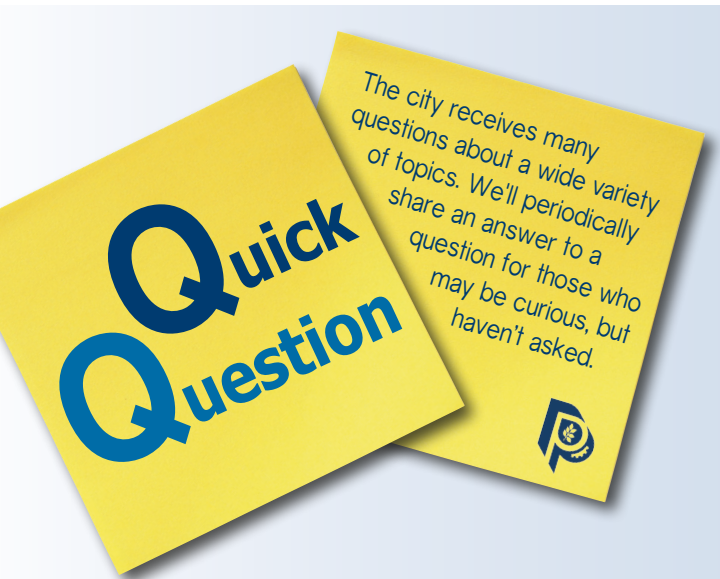
The proposed budget features a 4.9 percent levy increase, which includes funding for street reconstruction, recreation, park replacement and capital improvements. An increase

in the levy does not automatically translate to a jump in city property taxes. Because of the growing tax base, most homeowners of properties in the \$350,000 range will actually see a reduction in city property taxes. The city’s general fund is set to increase about \$1.2 million from 2016.

## Upcoming Budget Milestones

The City Council still has time to make changes to the budget, including lowering – but not increasing – the levy. City Council will adopt the Capital Improvement Program, budget and levy at a public hearing 7 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 13 at Plymouth City Hall, 3400 Plymouth Blvd.

More information about the budget and CIP is available online at [plymouthmn.gov/financialreport](http://plymouthmn.gov/financialreport).



**Question:** What is the status of the City of Plymouth's water meter upgrade project?

**Answer:** The water meter upgrade project has progressed fairly consistent with its projected timeline. As of press time, the project is roughly two-thirds complete. The project, which began earlier this year, involves swapping all outdated water meters in Plymouth for new radio-read models.

The goal of the project is to improve the consistency of water meter readings, make meter reading operations more efficient and replace a system that had exceeded its expected useful life.

At press time, more than 14,000 water meters had been replaced in Plymouth homes and businesses. The majority of remaining work is in the northern and eastern portions of the city.

“We greatly appreciate everyone’s cooperation in this process,” Administrative Services Director Luke Fischer said. “We recognize that it can be an inconvenience, but the entire meter reading operation will be more efficient once meters are replaced.”



Earlier this year, the city began a project to update all outdated water meters in the city.

## If Your Meter Hasn't Been Replaced

Residents who have yet to have their meter replaced will be notified by the city’s contractor, Professional Meters Inc., when it’s time for the swap. Residents should look for mailed notifications from PMI – failure to respond after three notifications will result in a \$100 per month manual read charge.

More information about the project is available at [plymouthmn.gov/newmeters](http://plymouthmn.gov/newmeters).

## Vote ... from page 1

### Direct Balloting Begins Nov. 1

Avoid standing in line on Election Day with direct balloting. A new option this year, direct balloting allows residents to vote in person up to a week early – beginning Tuesday, Nov. 1.

To vote early via direct balloting, voters must complete an application and vote in person at Plymouth City Hall, 3400 Plymouth Blvd.

Direct ballots are fed through a tabulator machine – just like on Election Day. The process does not require the use of absentee ballot envelopes. City Hall is open extended hours for direct balloting. Hours include 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesday-Friday, Nov. 1-4; 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 5; and 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday, Nov. 7.

## Applicants needed for committees, commissions

The City Council is accepting applications for several committees and commissions that advise the City Council on an array of issues. Applications will be accepted through 4:30 p.m. Monday, Nov. 14. The City Council will interview applicants and make appointments later this year for terms beginning in early 2017.

The following may have openings: Environmental Quality Committee, Housing and Redevelopment Authority, Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission and Planning Commission. Additionally, the Elm Creek, Bassett Creek or Shingle Creek Watershed management commissions may have vacancies for Plymouth seats.

For an application and more information, visit [plymouthmn.gov/commissions](http://plymouthmn.gov/commissions) or contact City Clerk Sandy Engdahl at 763-509-5080 or [sengdahl@plymouthmn.gov](mailto:sengdahl@plymouthmn.gov).

## Absentee Voting is Underway

Voters who cannot get to polls may vote by absentee ballot, which is available through Election Day. Absentee voting can be done in person at Plymouth City Hall or by mail.

Absentee ballot applications may be downloaded at [plymouthmn.gov/absentee](http://plymouthmn.gov/absentee) or obtained by calling Hennepin County Elections at 612-348-5151. The city must receive all absentee ballots by 3 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 8.

## Voter Registration

You can register at your polling location on Election Day. If you already registered to vote, you do not need to register again unless you changed your name, moved to a different address or have not voted within the last two years. For more information, including the acceptable forms of identification, visit [plymouthmn.gov/voterreg](http://plymouthmn.gov/voterreg).



The City Council is accepting applications for committees and commissions that give advice on an array of issues.

## Home Energy Squad visit available at reduced rate

Homeowners can lower monthly energy costs with a visit from the Home Energy Squad – a program that helps residents understand how their home uses energy.

Through the program, residents receive a customized home visit from energy professionals with the nonprofit Center for Energy and the Environment.

The squad installs energy saving materials, performs a blower door test, completes an insulation inspection and identifies other ways to save energy in the home. More than 14,000 homeowners in the metro have benefitted.

At the end of the visit, which takes two hours or less, residents receive a report that includes energy improvement recommendations, options for low-interest financing and information about available utility rebates.

Due to underwriting by the Plymouth Housing and Redevelopment Authority, cost to participate is discounted to \$70 for Plymouth residents who reside in the Xcel Energy and CenterPoint Energy service area.

For more information or to schedule a Home Energy Squad visit, call 612-335-5874 or visit [mncee.org/plymouth](http://mncee.org/plymouth).

## HAPPENINGS

**Plymouth Arts Fair** – 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 19 and 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 20, Plymouth Creek Center, 14800 34th Ave. N. Free admission. More than 30 local and regional juried artists display, demonstrate and sell their artwork. Entertainment is available for the entire family, including a special children's activity area on Saturday. Musicians will perform throughout both days of the Plymouth Arts Fair.

**Old Fashioned Christmas** – 2-5 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 10, Plymouth Creek Park, 3625 Fernbrook Lane. Free. Participants can snack on cookies, roast s'mores, take a horse-drawn sleigh ride, enjoy choir songs, hear

holiday tales and visit Santa Claus, Mrs. Claus, elves and reindeer. The event will also include a toy drive – new, unwrapped toys for children from birth to age 18 will be accepted.

**New Year's Eve Event** – 6-9 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 31, Plymouth Ice Center/Life Time Fitness, 3650 Plymouth Blvd. Ring in the new year with family fun, including ice skating, crafts, face painting, entertainment, swimming, inflatables, food, games and open gym time. Event cost is \$10 per person if pre-registered by 4:30 p.m. Dec. 30. Cost at the door is \$13. No cost for children younger than age 2. To register, call 763-509-5200 or visit [plymouthmn.gov](http://plymouthmn.gov).



# Plowing Plymouth: City crews ready for what winter brings

Winter is creeping up, and with it comes the white stuff. Whether you love or loathe snow, know that the City of Plymouth stands ready to keep it off the roadways.

## 310+ Miles of Road

During snowfalls of less than 2 ½ inches, the city’s Streets Division is equipped to handle removal operations for most city streets. However, if a storm dumps 2 ½ inches of snow or more, help is needed from other city divisions and a team of contracted snowplow operators to clear all streets in Plymouth. During a large snow event, roughly 50 snow-removal vehicles clear Plymouth’s roadways and cul-de-sacs.

Even with a crew of 50, it generally takes eight to 10 hours after snow stops falling to completely clear Plymouth’s more than 310 miles of roads and 884 cul-de-sacs. Plowing hundreds of miles of roadway takes significant resources and time. Snowplow operators are trained to clear snow as quickly as possible while remaining safe.

“We ask residents to appreciate how large of an undertaking citywide snow removal is and to remain patient,” said Streets Manager Gary Smith. “Drivers – please give us room to do our job safely. Parents – keep yourselves and your children safe when plows are around and understand that snow removal is an ongoing effort.”

## Trails Maintained for Pedestrian Access

No matter how much snow falls, people still need to move around. In addition to crews plowing streets, Plymouth also has a crew working to clear the city’s many miles of trails.

“The city doesn’t shut down when it snows – kids still need to get to school and residents need to access transit stations,



*In the event of a storm that dumps 2 ½ inches of snow or more, roughly 50 snow-removal vehicles work to clear Plymouth’s roadways.*

commercial areas and high-density housing,” said Parks and Recreation Deputy Director Barb Northway. “We do our best to make sure that we maintain access for not only cars, but pedestrians as well.”

The Parks and Forestry Division is ready with vehicles designed to clear trails, trucks fitted with plows and tractors equipped with snow blowers. Plymouth is able to clear roughly 104 of the city’s 156 total miles of trail. The entire process is done without chemical treatment.

Staff clears trails as designated by City Council action each year. In late October and early November, city staff marks trails with stakes so plows can more easily navigate the paths. Staff asks residents not to remove the stakes.

According to Plymouth City Code, residents of homes with abutting sidewalks are required to keep paths clear of snow and ice. Residents who wish to clear sidewalks beyond their property line to establish trail loops are able to do so, though permission from the city is required.

Plymouth’s recreational trails that are not cleared remain open for snowshoeing, walking or cross country skiing, as conditions allow.

## How residents can prepare for snow plow season

To keep operations efficient and reduce shoveling, residents should do the following:

### Follow Parking Regulations

- Parking is prohibited on all streets after a 2 ½-inch snowfall until the street has been plowed curb-to-curb. Violators may be tagged and towed.
- Plymouth also has a year-round ordinance that prohibits parking on city streets from 2-5 a.m.

### Shovel Smart

- Do not shovel, plow or blow snow into the street. In addition to being illegal, blowing snow in the street makes it more difficult to clear roadways (especially cul-de-sacs).
- Keep your mailbox clear to ensure postal delivery.
- If it’s likely that streets will be plowed on collection day, place refuse and recycling containers 5 feet back in the driveway to prevent waste from being scattered after a plow passes.
- Clear snow and ice around fire hydrants.

### Play it Safe

- Parents are encouraged to talk to children about snowplow safety. Children should stay away from snow piled at the curb and be warned not to build forts in the piles. The force of snow coming off a plow can bury a fort and harm a child. Children should also be taught to stay at least 20 feet back in the driveway when a plow comes down the street.
- Be careful when driving and keep a safe distance when following a snowplow. Use extreme caution



*Be careful when driving and following a snowplow. It is often difficult for operators to see behind equipment.*

when passing plowing or de-icing equipment. Remember – it is difficult for operators to see directly behind their equipment.

### Make Snow Removal More Efficient

- To protect your turf, mark the edge of the road or curb to help the snowplow operator avoid damaging the lawn. Snowplows often operate when visibility is hampered by blowing snow, fog or darkness. These conditions make it difficult for the operator to see the edge of the pavement or curb. Simply mark the edge of the road or curb along the property with 2-foot-tall reflective or brightly colored stakes placed at about 20-foot intervals.
- If your schedule allows, wait until the street is plowed before shoveling to the end of the driveway.
- Pile snow at the end of the driveway to the right, facing the street. This will help reduce the amount of snow in the driveway from the next plowing.

## MAKE A DIFFERENCE

# Volunteer!

The city is seeking volunteers who are:

**Enthusiastic about winter sports.** Take tickets at high school hockey games through February.

**Passionate about the environment and green things.** Remove buckthorn Saturdays, Oct. 29 and Nov. 5. Groups and families are welcome.

**Friendly and love to provide good service.** Greet visitors and help with activities during special City of Plymouth events, including the New Year’s Eve event and Fire & Ice.

To find out more about these and other upcoming opportunities, call 763-509-5230 or visit [plymouthmn.gov/volunteer](http://plymouthmn.gov/volunteer).

## Take a Closer Look



*Jeff Bednar*

### Jeff Bednar

Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) volunteer

**As a CERT volunteer, my job is** to educate our community about disaster preparedness for hazards that may impact our area. CERT also trains in

basic disaster response skills such as emergency communications, fire safety, firefighter rehab, light search and rescue, lost person search, team leadership/organization, disaster medical operations and event/incident crowd/traffic management.

CERT volunteers also support our local emergency response agencies by taking an active role in emergency preparedness exercises and projects. One of my favorite activities is to assist community partners at many local events.

**My favorite thing about being a city volunteer is** having the opportunity to give back to the great community we’re so fortunate to live in and working with our community partners and the remarkable members of the Plymouth CERT team. It’s also very rewarding to be able to assist and work with great city staff members.

**Because Jeff volunteers,** Plymouth residents and event attendees can rest assured and feel safe knowing that there are highly trained individuals ready to help, should an emergency occur.

### Are You the Newest CERT Volunteer?

If you’re interested in playing a critical role in Plymouth’s emergency preparedness efforts, consider applying to become a CERT volunteer.

CERT volunteers provide critical support to firefighters, police officers and paramedics at emergency scenes and disaster sites.

They also work proactively to participate in community education, emergency preparedness planning, and crime, fire and injury prevention activities. Following 24 total hours of initial training, all CERT members will be required to make a two-year commitment.

In addition to completing a CERT-specific volunteer application process, successful candidates must be Plymouth residents, have a high school degree or equivalent, be at least 21 years old, have a Minnesota driver’s license and pass a criminal background check.

For more information and to receive a CERT application, due Wednesday, Nov. 30, contact 763-509-5230 or download an application from [plymouthmn.gov/volunteer](http://plymouthmn.gov/volunteer).





SEASONAL SPOTLIGHT

**Yard Waste Site Closing Nov. 27** – The Yard Waste Site, 14900 23rd Ave. N., is set to close for the season Sunday, Nov. 27. The site is open 3-6 p.m. Wednesdays through Fridays and 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. weekends, weather permitting. Due to the site’s popularity in the fall, residents are encouraged to arrive at least 15 minutes prior to closing time. The site will be closed Friday, Nov. 11 for Veterans Day and Thursday, Nov. 24 for Thanksgiving, but will be open Friday, Nov. 25. For hours and information, visit [plymouthmn.gov/yardwaste](http://plymouthmn.gov/yardwaste).

**Homestead Filing** – Residents who recently purchased a new home may file for homestead classification. Certain relatives may also qualify. Benefits include possible eligibility for reduced property taxes or a property tax refund. The deadline for filing is Thursday, Dec. 15. Homes must be owned and occupied by Thursday, Dec. 1, 2016 to be eligible for taxes payable in 2017. For info, call 763-509-5350 or visit [plymouthmn.gov/homestead](http://plymouthmn.gov/homestead).

**Indoor Walking** – Stay active this winter by taking advantage of free indoor walking at the Plymouth Creek Center Fieldhouse, 14800 34th Ave., from November through mid-April. For hours, call 763-509-5292 or visit [plymouthmn.gov](http://plymouthmn.gov).



**City Offices Close for Holidays** – City offices will be closed Friday, Nov. 11 for Veterans Day; Nov. 24-25 for Thanksgiving; Friday, Dec. 23 (after noon) and Monday, Dec. 26 for Christmas; and Monday, Jan. 2 for New Year’s.

Social Snapshot. A look at what you may have missed

Residents recently had the chance to experience a police ride along through the screen of a tablet, phone or computer.

The Plymouth Police Department held its first-ever Tweetalong at the end of August.

Tweets included medical calls, reporting to the scene of a vehicle crash, documenting a harassment report, traffic stops, requested patrols and following up on report of suspicious activity.

Initiatives such as the Tweetalong encourage transparency and engagement with the public, while providing an inside look at the typical duties of a Plymouth police officer.

Answering even simple questions, such as “What’s for dinner?” allows the department to add a personal touch to its interactions with residents.

Follow the City of Plymouth on social media and don't miss the latest on city news, events and activities – as well as the job duties and dietary choices of Plymouth police officers.

**City of Plymouth, MN** @PlymouthMN\_gov · Aug 26  
We're all geared up and patrolling. Looking for traffic infractions and suspicious activity. #tweetalong

**City of Plymouth, MN** @PlymouthMN\_gov · Aug 26  
Left medical call. Adult male reported trouble breathing. He's being transported by ambulance to the hospital. #tweetalong

**City of Plymouth, MN** @PlymouthMN\_gov · Aug 26  
Single vehicle crash on I-494. Driver hit construction barrels. Windshield damaged. Calling for a tow. #tweetalong



**City of Plymouth, MN** @PlymouthMN\_gov · Aug 26  
.@JTAC\_Joe Dinner will be leftover stir fry back at the station before midnight. #tweetalong



Facebook.com/plymouthmn  
@PlymouthMN\_gov

Metrolink adds park and ride, new U of M and East Town service

By Mayor Kelli Slavik

If you regularly commute to downtown Minneapolis or the University of Minnesota, you should know about new options available from Plymouth Metrolink.

The changes could save you time, lessen the stress of your commute and cut costs – especially if you are paying downtown parking rates.

U of M students and faculty can catch a no-transfer ride all the way from Plymouth to campus. The student U-Pass is accepted on all Metrolink buses. Metrolink also extends to East Town in Minneapolis, which includes U.S. Bank Stadium, Wells Fargo, the Hennepin County Government Center and more.

Plymouth Metrolink also recently added a new park and ride at the Plymouth Presbyterian Church parking lot, 3755 Dunkirk Lane N. Riders can park their vehicles for no additional cost and catch Metrolink buses – including the new 774 extension to East Town and the U of M.

Once on the bus, Metrolink riders can take advantage of free Wi-Fi on all express route buses. Instead of fighting traffic, riders can catch up on the news, homework or email. Riders also benefit from the Metrolink app available for Android, iPhone and Windows Phone.

The app allows riders to plan their commute, track their bus in real time and receive alerts.

If you are dreading slow-moving, white-knuckled commutes this winter, now might be a good time to try Plymouth Metrolink.

In addition to bus stops throughout the community, Metrolink offers four park and ride lots – and, if needed, you can use Metrolink transfers on other regional transit systems, including Metro Transit.

For complete information about Plymouth Metrolink, visit [plymouthmn.gov/transit](http://plymouthmn.gov/transit).

**Plymouth News** is published bimonthly by the City of Plymouth to update residents and businesses on city government news.

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Contact the City

Phone.....763-509-5000  
MN Relay (Hearing/Speech Impaired).....7-1-1  
**Hours:**  
8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday  
8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesday

View Meetings

Live on Channel 16, 7 p.m.  
On-demand video link at city website  
**City Council:** Nov. 15, 29 and Dec. 13  
**Planning Commission:** Nov. 2, 16 and Dec. 7, 21

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