



Shop at the Plymouth Arts Fair

The free Plymouth Arts Fair is set for 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 17 and 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 18 at the Plymouth Creek Center, 14800 34th Ave. N. Around 30 local and regional artists display and sell their artwork. Entertainment is available for the entire family, including a special children's activity area on Saturday. Musical performances are slated throughout both days of the event.

Plymouth's growth drives city's proposed 2019 budget and levy

In recent years, the big story in Plymouth has been steady development and population growth. To ensure city services keep up, Plymouth has maintained a consistent pace of budgetary increases, which continue in the 2019 proposed budget with an overall preliminary levy increase of 4.9 percent.

Meeting Service Needs

Since 2010, Plymouth's population has increased by more than 6,000 people. Plymouth City Manager Dave Callister noted that, with a community of about 77,000, it's important to keep services equitable throughout the city.



As Plymouth's population grows, the city adjusts the annual budget to accommodate the increased demand for city services.

Budget ... continued on page 3

General Election: Absentee voting and direct balloting offer options for voters

With signs in yards and ads on TV, it's clear that election season is in full swing. Polls on Election Day are open 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 6. However, residents have options to avoid lines and vote at their convenience with direct balloting and absentee voting.

The general election includes races for school board, city, county, judicial, state and federal offices. Polling locations for precincts 1, 6, 7, 11 and 23 have changed since the 2016 general election.

Registered voters in those areas received notices in the mail specifying the new locations.



Absentee voting is underway, and direct balloting begins Tuesday, Oct. 30 ahead of Election Day, Tuesday, Nov. 6.

Vote 2018 ... continued on page 3



Meet Santa Dec. 8 in Plymouth

Old Fashioned Christmas returns 2-5 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 8, at Plymouth Creek Park and Plymouth Historical Society, 3625 Fernbrook Lane. Participants can 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 includes a toy drive for children from birth to age 18, which accepts new, unwrapped toys.



File for homestead by Dec. 15

Residents who recently purchased a home may file for homestead classification. Certain relatives may also qualify. Benefits include possible eligibility for reduced property taxes. The deadline for filing is Saturday, Dec. 15. Homes must be owned and occupied by Saturday, Dec. 1, 2018 to be eligible for taxes payable in 2019. For more information, call 763-509-5350 or visit plymouthmn.gov/homestead.

Plymouth on Parade 2018



Plymouth on Parade drew hundreds to Plymouth Boulevard on a sunny September afternoon. The parade included musical performers, marching bands, acrobatics and more. After the parade, attendees were invited to the Hilde Performance Center for more activities.

Plymouth reworks snow plowing operations for 2018-2019 season

As snow season returns, Plymouth has implemented a number of carefully considered changes to its snow and ice management operations. Aimed at improving service times and cul-de-sac plowing, the modifications reduce the snowfall threshold for a snow emergency – a citywide full plow call out and associated parking restrictions – and fine tune how cul-de-sacs are cleared. The changes, recommended by Public Works staff and approved by the City Council, came about after city staff analyzed past years’ snow removal activities, considered resident feedback, reviewed other cities’ policies and examined the results of a plowing survey conducted last spring.



Changes to Plymouth’s snow plowing operations include lowering the citywide call out threshold from 2 1/2 inches to 2 inches of snow.

Snow Plowing Threshold

Beginning this season, a snowfall of 2 inches or more triggers a snow emergency. The previous threshold was 2 1/2 inches or more. The new standard aligns Plymouth’s policy with that of neighboring communities. For snowfalls of less than 2 inches, the city continues to treat and plow main roadways. During any snow event, drivers are encouraged to give plow operators plenty of room to do their jobs and parents should stay alert to keep children safe when plows are in the neighborhood.

Service Time

New this year, the city has adjusted routes and staffing to shave off an hour of the time it takes to complete a citywide plow. While each snow event is unique, the goal is to have streets and cul-de-sacs cleared within nine hours after snow quits falling, based on an average snowfall.

Additionally, after a citywide plow has been completed and the full plow crew goes home to rest, the city will retain a small crew to handle routine follow-up calls.

“The new model will help fill the gap created when drivers take time to rest after plowing for eight to 10 hours,” said Streets and Utilities Manager Joe Paumen.

Cul-de-sacs

Cul-de-sacs present unique snow plowing challenges – and Plymouth has more than 920 cul-de-sacs among its 320 miles of streets.

Last spring, the city conducted a snow plowing survey using the online survey tool FlashVote (more information is available at plymouthmn.gov/flashvote). The results showed that residents were satisfied overall with plowing. Of those who voiced concerns, the majority lived on cul-de-sacs. After reviewing survey results, staff considered new options for tackling cul-de-sacs. Changes include increasing the number of contracted plow drivers clearing cul-de-sacs by creating additional zones to ensure timeliness and requiring contractors keep equipment in each cul-de-sac zone until plowing is completed.

Cul-de-sac plowing will also benefit from new public works positions and additional rental equipment, which the City Council approved in the 2018 budget.

Balancing Act

As changes take effect, Plymouth Public Works will continue to balance safety, economics, personnel and environmental concerns as it seeks to meet the challenges of winter weather.

“By making adjustments to our operations and staffing, we will be more nimble in responding to snow events,” said Paumen.

Trail Plowing

In addition to plowing streets, Plymouth also has a crew clearing the city’s many miles of trails. The Parks and Forestry Division clears 115 of the city’s 170 miles of trail and the entire process is done without chemical treatment.

Parks and Forestry staff asks residents to keep the following in mind:

- Conditions often do not allow plows to clear trails down to bare pavement
- The popular Luce Line trail is cleared by the Three Rivers Park District
- Trails often need multiple passes to clear – in some cases plows clearing adjacent roads will push snow on an already plowed trail

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.

Stay Informed

Keep up-to-date on snow emergency information – sign up for snow emergency alert emails at plymouthmn.gov/enotify.



Residents can help plowing operations run smoothly.

Tips for residents

To keep operations efficient, residents should know winter parking regulations and use the following tips.

Follow Parking Regulations

- Parking is prohibited on all streets after a 2-inch snowfall until the street has been plowed curb-to-curb. Violators may be ticketed 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 difficult to clear roadways.
- Keep mailboxes 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.
- Clear snow and ice around fire hydrants.

Play it Safe

- Parents are encouraged to talk to children about snow plow 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 snow plow. Use extreme caution when passing plowing or de-icing equipment. 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 snow plow operators avoid damaging the lawn. Mark the curb along the property with 2-foot-tall reflective or brightly colored stakes placed at about 20-foot intervals.
- 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 helps reduce snow in the driveway from the next plowing.

Salt Responsibly

High levels of road salt can quickly contaminate water resources, harm fish and affect aquatic plants. Use these tips from the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District to reduce the impact of salt.

- Remove snow early and often.
- Pay attention to the temperature. Salt only works at temperatures above 15 F. If you need something that will melt at colder temperatures, use calcium chloride or magnesium chloride.
- As a rule of thumb, use no more than 1 pound of salt per 250 square feet (a 12-ounce mug is about 1 pound of salt and an average parking space is about 150 square feet).
- If salt or sand is visible on dry pavement, it’s not doing anything and will run off. Sweep up the extra and reuse it during the next snowstorm.

SEASONAL SPOTLIGHT

Yard Waste Site Closes Nov. 25 – The Yard Waste Site, 14900 23rd Ave. N., is set to close for the season Sunday, Nov. 25. 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 Monday, Nov. 12 for Veterans Day, and Thursday, Nov. 22 and Friday, Nov. 23 for Thanksgiving. For hours and information, visit plymouthmn.gov/yardwaste.

Indoor Walking – Stay active this winter by taking advantage of free indoor walking at the Plymouth Creek Center Fieldhouse, 14800 34th Ave. N., from November through March. For hours, call 763-509-5292 or visit plymouthmn.gov/fieldhouse.

City Offices Close for Holidays – City offices will be closed for Veterans Day (Monday, Nov. 12), Thanksgiving (Nov. 22-23), Christmas (after noon Monday, Dec. 24 and Tuesday, Dec. 25) and New Year’s Day (Tuesday, Jan. 1).



Voters to elect three City Council candidates and new mayor Nov. 6

Four City Council seats, including mayor, will be on the Tuesday, Nov. 6 general election ballot. The following candidates are running for four-year terms:

Mayor

- Ali Shater
- Andrey Skotnikov
- Jeffry Wosje

At Large

- Dan Brown
- Ned Carroll
- “Marky” Marlene Williamson

Ward 2 – Southwest Plymouth

- Marc S. Anderson
- “Terry” Frances Jaffoni
- Melanie Reitz
- Nick Roehl

Ward 4 – Northeast Plymouth

- Julie Pointner Korts
- Jim Prom



The 2018 general election ballot features four council seats: Mayor, At Large, Ward 2 and Ward 4.

A city council candidate forum, sponsored by the Wayzata-Plymouth League of Women Voters, was held in early October and is available at ccxmedia.org and replayed on CCX Media’s channel 799/12. To stream or find replay times, check ccxmedia.org/election-2018.

On Election Day, CCX 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. Results will be posted on the Secretary of State’s website, sos.state.mn.us, as they become available.

Vote 2018 ... from page 1

Direct Balloting

Direct balloting allows residents to feed their ballots through the ballot counter just like on Election Day, only sooner. The process begins Tuesday, Oct. 30 and is more streamlined than requiring the use of absentee ballot envelopes.

To vote early via direct balloting, voters must complete an absentee ballot application and vote in person during normal business hours (8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday) at Plymouth City Hall, 3400 Plymouth Blvd. City Hall will offer extended hours for direct balloting two days – 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 3 and 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday, Nov. 5.

Absentee Voting

Voters who cannot get to the polls may vote by absentee ballot. Absentee voting began Sept. 21 and can be done in person at Plymouth City Hall or by mail. Absentee ballot applications may be downloaded



Residents have options to avoid lines and cast their votes early.

at plymouthmn.gov/absentee or obtained by calling Hennepin County Elections at 612-348-5151. The city or Hennepin County must receive all absentee ballots by 3 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 6.

Voter Registration

Residents can register at their polling location on Election Day. Residents already registered to vote do not need to register again unless they have changed their 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.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Volunteer!

The city is seeking volunteers who are:

Committed to local history. Join the Plymouth Historical Society board of directors, care for artifact collections, assist with events and open houses, support social media efforts and more.

Enthusiastic about winter sports. Take tickets at high school hockey games through February 2019.

Passionate about the environment and green things. Remove buckthorn Saturdays, Oct. 20, Oct. 27 and Nov. 3 – groups and families welcome.

Friendly and love to provide good service. Greet visitors and help with activities during special events, including Fire & Ice Saturday, Feb. 2, 2019.

To find out more about these and other opportunities, visit plymouthmn.gov/volunteer or call 763-509-5230.

Take a Closer Look



Brandon Gierach

Brandon Gierach

Plymouth Historical Society Volunteer

As a volunteer, my job is to digitize historical documents, preserve artifacts, and conduct research for small projects at the Plymouth Historical Society.

My favorite thing about being a city volunteer is that I get to do hands-on historical work and research.

The work is like solving a mystery. You are surrounded by clues and huge amounts of information and you never know what you might find. Each day provides the potential to discover something truly remarkable and inspiring.

One day I am cleaning a World War I helmet, and the next I’m reading about the immigrant experience in the late 1800s. I’m learning something new every day.

Because Brandon volunteers, the history made today in Plymouth will be preserved for the residents of tomorrow.

Budget ... from page 1

“Much of the growth we have seen has occurred in the northwestern part of the city,” Callister said. “We need to make sure that residents in newer areas receive the level of quality service that Plymouth is known for.”

To maintain service levels, the proposed 2019 budget includes the addition of 15.4 full-time-equivalent (FTE) employees, with a focus on public safety and public works.

As employees are added, comparative staffing levels have remained largely unchanged for decades. For example, there were 3.5 FTEs per 1,000 residents in 1980. The proposed 2019 budget features 3.6 FTEs per 1,000 residents.

The new positions include six full-time firefighters – increasing Plymouth’s full-time firefighter count to 12.

The new positions will allow at least one fire station in Plymouth to be staffed 24/7. The change is designed to create more consistent and reliable response times.

Other new staff in the budget include five positions in the Public Works Department.

These positions add support to a number of divisions throughout Plymouth’s public works system. The new employees will also serve as additional snow plow operators in the winter (see page 2 for details about improved snow plow operations in Plymouth).



Included in the 2019 proposed budget is funding for six full-time firefighter positions. The new positions will allow at least one Plymouth fire station to be staffed 24/7, which is intended to create more consistent and reliable response times.

Emphasizing Financial Responsibility

Though the proposed budget features an increase, the added tax base from new growth minimizes the impact on homeowners. For example, a \$350,000 home in Plymouth will see an annual property tax increase of about \$16 due to the changes. Plymouth utilizes a number of tools to

carefully plan the city’s finances to the extent possible, and to keep the property tax rate stable. According to Hennepin County, Plymouth maintains the lowest tax rate among comparable cities with populations greater than 45,000 in the county. Another way Plymouth keeps taxes low is avoiding debt when possible and looking for opportunities to pay off existing debt early. Plans in the proposed 2019 budget include prepaying a bond issue resulting in an interest savings of more than \$150,000.

Upcoming Budget Milestones

The City Council still has time to make changes to the budget, including lowering – but not increasing – the tax levy. Upcoming budget milestones include meetings at City Hall, 3400 Plymouth Blvd.:

- The City Council may decide to hold another budget study session to address any remaining questions, which is tentatively scheduled for 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 13. Check plymouthmn.gov for up-to-date information about the meeting’s status.
- 7 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 11: Budget public hearing and adoption of the Capital Improvement Plan, budget and 2019 levy.

View the budget, CIP and Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, which provides detail on the city’s financial status and practices, at plymouthmn.gov/financialreport.



IN BRIEF

Apply for Committees, Commissions – The City of Plymouth is accepting applications for several groups that advise the City Council. Applications will be accepted through 4:30 p.m. Monday, Nov. 26. The City Council will interview applicants and make appointments later this year for terms beginning in early 2019. The following may have openings: Environmental Quality Committee, Housing and Redevelopment Authority, Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission and Planning Commission. To download an application and learn more, visit plymouthmn.gov/commissions.

City Departments Awarded – The City of Plymouth was recently recognized with three national awards and two statewide awards. The national City County Communications and Marketing Association recognized the Financial Extra with an Award of Excellence. A collaborative effort of the Communications and Finance divisions, the annual publication promotes financial transparency and helps taxpayers better understand city finances. 3CMA also awarded the Communications Division a Savvy Award and Silver Circle Award for photography. The Parks and Recreation Department earned two awards from the Minnesota Recreation and Parks Association. Plymouth netted an award in the Volunteer Initiative category for its use of volunteers at the USA Hockey Sled Classic held at the Plymouth Ice Center last year. The association also recognized the Northwest Greenway in the Parks and Facility category.

Santa’s Mailbox – Children can drop off a letter to Santa Monday, Nov. 26 through Friday, Dec. 7 at Plymouth City Hall (3400 Plymouth Blvd.), Plymouth Ice Center (3650 Plymouth Blvd.), or the Plymouth Creek Center (14800 34th Ave. N.). Santa’s helpers will send a personalized response. Letters must include a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Social Snapshot.

A look at what you may have missed

High schooler Sam Lieberman captured the online attention of thousands this summer when his Eagle Scout project in Plymouth went viral on the city’s social media platforms.

For the project, the 16-year-old partnered with the Plymouth Police Department to install a memorial and statue honoring police K-9s at the Plymouth Public Safety Building.

Lieberman raised \$6,500 to fund the project and received financial and volunteer help from Boy Scout Troop 206 and the Plymouth Lions Club. The memorial features a bronze statue of a German shepherd and a commemorative plaque.

Photos from the memorial’s unveiling ceremony were posted to Plymouth’s Twitter and Facebook pages, and garnered heavy traffic.

On Facebook, the post was liked by 644 users and shared 95 times. It had a total reach of 18,598 users. On Twitter, the post was liked 37 times and made more than 5,500 impressions.

Follow the City of Plymouth on social media to keep up-to-date on city news and see other interesting stories and photos.



Sam Lieberman’s (top) Eagle Scout project was unveiled in August at the Plymouth Public Safety Building. K-9 officer teams attended the ceremony (bottom, from left to right: Matt Gliniany and Stryker, Steve Larson and Knight, and Bill Dane and Odie).

Facebook.com/plymouthmn

@PlymouthMN_gov

Saying goodbye with gratitude

By Mayor Kelli Slavik

After eight years serving on the City Council and 12 years as mayor, I am not seeking re-election – so this is my last column. With my children at college, it is time to enjoy newfound flexibility. I struggled with the decision and know I will suffer moments of regret. While I don’t know what is next, I am looking forward to whatever new opportunities await.

As I leave office, I have many to thank. I couldn’t have effectively represented our community without input and support from those around me. I am grateful for my council colleagues, city staff and, of course, residents.

Representing the community I love for 20 years has been a great honor. The challenges and rewards have been immeasurable. I learned great lessons – most importantly, how to listen and collaborate. Each day brought something different, including the excitement of the unexpected.

Plymouth has undergone significant changes since I took office in 1999. Physical changes throughout the city are obvious. Less apparent are the ways technology has transformed local government. We are more efficient in delivering services, and email, texts and social media have affected how constituents and elected officials communicate.

Plymouth is in excellent shape. I am confident our community will continue to thrive and inspire pride in residents.

Looking back at the work we have accomplished together during my tenure, I am most proud of the fact that Plymouth was named No. 1 Best Place to Live by Money Magazine in 2008, as well as the expansion of I-494 and the creation of the Plymouth Veterans Memorial.

As I exit city service, I hope I’ve left a legacy of accountability, transparency, and most of all, a great love for my community. Thank you for the opportunity to serve and grow. It has been an honor and a privilege I will treasure the rest of my life.

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-Friday
8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesday (Community Development only)

View Meetings

Live on Channel 16, 7 p.m.
On-demand video link at city website
City Council: Nov. 13, 27 and Dec. 11
Planning Commission: Nov. 7 and Dec. 5, 19

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