



Fire & Ice 2021: A new take on a winter classic

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Plymouth Parks and Recreation has reimagined the annual Fire & Ice festival, which is traditionally held on Parkers Lake in early February. Instead of a one-day, in-person gathering, this year's Fire & Ice features a broad range of activities throughout the season that celebrate winter. For the latest information on activities, visit plymouthmn.gov/fireandice.



Plastic wraps protect hydrants

Residents may have noticed fire hydrants covered in plastic throughout Plymouth. The city wraps hydrants along high-traffic roadways to prevent damage from salt and sand during winter months. The plastic helps extend the life of a hydrant and is easily removed when access is needed.



Council adopts 2021 budget

The Plymouth City Council has adopted the 2021 budget, which includes an overall tax levy increase of 6.96% from 2020. Due to new growth, the impact on property taxes for owners of average value homes will be offset.

For owners of an average value home of \$400,000, the increase will be about \$40 a year for the city portion of their property tax bill. Property taxes are divided among the city, the school district, Hennepin County and other taxing jurisdictions. The city receives 22 cents of each residential property tax dollar, which pays for police and fire service, snowplowing, street maintenance, trail and park upkeep, recreation programs, community planning, housing programs and other local services. Detailed information about the budget, as well as the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, is available at plymouthmn.gov/financialreport.

Three council members reelected to seats in record-turnout 2020 general election

Three Plymouth City Council seats were on the 2020 general election ballot. All three seats were won by incumbents, and the following reelected council members will begin new four-year terms that expire Dec. 31, 2024:

- **Alise McGregor** – Ward 1 (northwest)
- **Jim Davis** – Ward 3 (southeast)
- **Jim Willis** – At-Large (all wards)

Not included in the 2020 general election were Ward 2 Council Member Nick Roehl, Ward 4 Council Member James Prom, At-Large Council Member Ned Carroll and Mayor Jeff Wosje.

Record-Breaking Turnout

This year, the City of Plymouth saw a record turnout – with 88% of eligible Plymouth voters participating in the 2020 general election. Of that amount, 76% cast their ballots prior to Election Day. According to City Clerk Sandy Engdahl, the election was a success.

“We had our highest voter turnout of all time, and the entire process went smoothly without any major issues,” she said. “In light of conducting a historic election during a pandemic, I would like to thank election staff, residents who served as election judges, and residents who exercised their right to vote.”

Groundbreaking celebrates beginning of Plymouth Creek Center construction

A major transformation is underway at the Plymouth Creek Center, as construction continues on the renovation and expansion project that will add 80,000 square feet to the community center. The project surpassed major milestones last fall as a groundbreaking ceremony was held, the first phase of construction began and \$5 million in state bonding was awarded to help offset project costs.

Phased Construction

Construction at the Creek Center will occur in two phases. When complete, the new Creek Center will feature three wings:

- **Event Wing** – Ballroom, Black Box Theatre and meeting rooms
- **Education Wing** – Active adults, youth, arts, music and STEM rooms
- **Active Wing** – Year-round indoor walking track, gym, fitness rooms and indoor playground

Phase 1 construction, which includes the Active Wing and east parking lot expansion, began in August and will wrap up fall 2021.



Construction is underway at the Plymouth Creek Center, which will be expanded by 80,000 square feet and offer a wide range of new amenities.

Phase 2 is scheduled for October 2021 to fall 2022. It will include renovation of the existing building and the Education Wing.

Portions of the facility will remain open and available during the entire construction process (dependent on guidelines surrounding COVID-19).

Throughout construction, entrances may be moved and parking availability may be limited.

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Winter lights at the Hilde Performance Center



Light displays welcome winter walkers at the Hilde Performance Center, 3500 Plymouth Blvd. Lights come on at dusk throughout the season, offering glittering tunnels, shooting stars, rainbow trees and more. There is no fee or need for an appointment.

Fire Department looks ahead to upcoming construction projects at two fire stations

With plans for major upgrades at two Plymouth fire stations approved, the City Council is slated to consider awarding bids for the projects in the coming weeks, which would allow construction to begin in April.

Fire Station 2 (12000 Old Rockford Road) and Fire Station 3 (3300 Dunkirk Lane N.) have been identified as operationally deficient as the Fire Department's staffing model moves from paid-on-call-based to a blended model that includes 24/7 staffing at the stations.

Both buildings are also aging and need upgrades. Station 2 (built 1977) will be torn down and rebuilt, while Station 3 (built 1989) will be renovated and expanded.

The city hosted virtual informational presentations last fall for residents to learn about the projects and ask questions of staff. Visit plymouthmn.gov/firestationprojects to view recordings of the meetings.

Important Improvements

To allow for full-time firefighters working 24-hour shifts, the new stations will include residence spaces, such as kitchens, dayrooms and dorms.

Both projects will also address a range of firefighter health issues, including toxin reduction, hot-cold contamination zoning and startle response reduction.

One of the highest priorities of the projects is to enhance the city's overall public safety and emergency preparedness.

The new stations will allow the Fire Department to continue transitioning its staffing model, which significantly reduces response times, especially for overnight calls.

Additionally, a new state-of-the-art emergency operations center will be included in Fire Station 2, and training facilities will be significantly enhanced at both stations.

According to Deputy Fire Chief Dave Dreelan, fire service levels are not expected to be impacted by construction.

"Work at both stations will be done in a phased approach to minimize any potential delay in response or change in the Fire Department's overall service level," Dreelan said. "We'll continue to operate from the sites throughout the



Fire Station 2 in central Plymouth will be completely rebuilt to serve the changing needs of the Fire Department.



Fire Station 3 in western Plymouth will be renovated and expanded. Renderings are courtesy of CNH Architects.

construction process, which may include temporary facilities to allow firefighters to continue serving the city from those locations."

Learn More

Visit plymouthmn.gov/firestationprojects for detailed information about both projects, including history, frequently asked questions and additional renderings of the new buildings.

Plymouth police continue community engagement in the age of COVID-19

Though many of the Plymouth Police Department's efforts to forge in-person connections have been hampered by the COVID-19 pandemic, police continue to identify ways to make inroads and build bridges with community members.

In recent years, Plymouth has placed increasing emphasis on the importance of strengthening its relationships with the community it serves. Plymouth police officers typically participate in hundreds of community engagement events each year – from planned activities to spontaneous nonenforcement-related interactions. However, the pandemic has severely limited the ways in which officers can safely interact with residents. These limitations have not stopped the department from developing new ways to reach community members.

Community Conversations

In October, Plymouth police, along with the Minnetonka and New Hope police departments, hosted the Power of a Question: Enriching Community Conversations.

The pilot meeting was held virtually via Zoom, and included community members, elected officials and police officers from all three departments, who gathered to have an open dialogue about policing. Footage from a real-life traffic stop prompted group discussion about the dynamics of police interactions in order to develop a better understanding of the thought processes, emotions and reactions of all parties involved.

The meeting was developed by a group of community members and law enforcement officials from the three cities that formed nearly four years ago after the officer-involved shooting of Philando Castile in Falcon Heights. The group gathers regularly to discuss issues surrounding law enforcement, bias and improving policing. Since the death of George Floyd, another group has formed specifically for



The 2020 Plymouth Public Safety Citizens Academy continued while adhering to COVID-19 safety guidelines.

Black men to share their perspectives with police officers through open dialogue. The groups now meet virtually, allowing the conversations to continue.

An Ongoing Effort

Plymouth police have also worked to retool some of the traditional community engagement efforts for safety during the pandemic, such as the Public Safety Citizens Academy, Presents with Public Safety and educational outreach. Through technology, participation adjustments and venue changes, police continue to develop community connections.

"We are doing whatever we reasonably can to engage and create these conversations, and more are being planned," Plymouth Public Safety Director Mike Goldstein said. "Our goal is to bridge gaps and focus on making sure everyone feels safe in our community. Every minute of these connections is worthwhile."

Stay tuned to plymouthmn.gov and the City of Plymouth's social media platforms to learn about community engagement opportunities as they become available.

HAPPENINGS

Connect to Rec – As recreation offerings have fluctuated and many events have been canceled or retooled during the pandemic, the Plymouth Parks and Recreation Department remains committed to utilizing Connect to Rec to reach residents.

Connect to Rec gives residents unique and engaging recreation opportunities that families can participate in safely, whether from the comfort of their homes or out and about in Plymouth parks. Residents can participate in virtual programs such as art classes, adult fitness, educational opportunities, dance, Zumba classes and more – all of which are available online. There are also interactive options such as trivia and game nights, and the department regularly offers recreation kits filled with family activities.

Visit plymouthmn.gov/connectorec to see available programming. Some programs require registration or a fee, while other programs are free. Check plymouthmn.gov for the most up-to-date information about the status of city events and programs.

Connect to Rec activities are sponsored by Kyle Vitense State Farm and TCF Bank.

Plymouth READS – Plymouth READS has announced "This Tender Land" by Minnesota author William Kent Krueger as its 2021 book selection.

From the publisher: "William Kent Krueger has done it again with another New York Times Best Seller. This Tender Land is an homage to classic American literature and an action-packed, engaging tale, and a welcoming salve for our times. Four orphan children banding together through friendship, resilience and hope face Depression-era challenges and unexpected kindness during an adventurous voyage down the Mississippi River."

Plymouth READS promotes public literacy and participation through an annual book selection, which the community is invited to read. Copies of this year's book will be available from the Plymouth Library, 15700 36th Ave. N.

While a number of community events typically accompany Plymouth READS, this year's program may be altered due to COVID-19.

As of press time, Krueger is scheduled to speak 7 p.m. Thursday, April 15 – either live or virtually. Residents should visit plymouthreads.org or follow Plymouth READS on Facebook to learn more as information becomes available.

Plymouth BUSINESS buzz

Here is a rundown of major Plymouth business news.

Plymouth welcomed **Luce Line Brewery** in November. The craft brewery and taproom sits at 12901 16th Ave. N., adjacent to its namesake, the Luce Line Trail. It offers a variety of beer, as well as hard seltzer and non-alcoholic drink options.

ElMar's NY Pizza recently opened in the Plymouth City Center area at 15725 37th Ave. N. Suite 5. Created by Plymouth residents, the new restaurant's aim is to offer an authentic representation of New York-style pizza.

Another City Center business, the **Foursome Fine Apparel and Shoes** recently adjusted part of its retail operations to accommodate changing clothing styles brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. With its new offering, dubbed Boundary Clothing, the focus revolves around working from home and showcases a more casual and active line of apparel.

Plymouth Police Chief Mike Goldstein set to retire after landmark career

Among residents, community organizations and law enforcement agencies, both neighboring and nationwide, the Plymouth Police Department has earned a strong reputation for steadfast service, progressive practices and professionalism.

While it has taken many hands to develop and foster the department's reputation and culture, the leader at the helm has been Public Safety Director Mike Goldstein. And after more than three decades of service to the Plymouth community, Goldstein will retire at the end of January.



Public Safety Director/Police Chief
Mike Goldstein

Plymouth Through and Through

Raised in Plymouth, Goldstein has devoted his entire professional life to the city. He started as a high schooler curious about a possible career and worked his way to the top position with the Police Department.

In 1984, as a senior at Armstrong High School, he joined Plymouth's first class of Police Explorers – a group that provides young people a glimpse into the responsibilities of police officers serving their communities.

From there, Goldstein went on to be a part of the first group of Plymouth Police Reserves, volunteering with the department while studying criminal justice and public administration at the University of St. Thomas.

In 1990, he was hired as a full-time sworn officer with the Plymouth Police Department – badge number 32.

With a population of about 30,000 less than it is today, Goldstein recalls a very different working environment back then, with much less technology and fewer than half of the ranks of the current department. A large swath of the city remained rural at the time – and he remembers calls to help farmers wrangle loose animals.

Throughout the years, the city grew and Goldstein's career grew along with it. He was offered a series of what he calls “cherished opportunities,” and was promoted to sergeant in 1994, lieutenant in 2001, captain in 2003, police chief in 2004 and was named the city's public safety director in 2015, when the Police and Fire departments joined under a single umbrella.

“I chose to work for and stay with Plymouth because it's what I know – it's about having roots in the community, and

serving family and friends,” Goldstein said. “But it's mostly about the people I've had the opportunity to work with – these are the women and men I want to be with, and I've never taken that for granted.”

An Accomplished Career

During his time with Plymouth, Goldstein's leadership has set the tone – Plymouth prioritizes high-quality public safety service without leaving any community members behind. Throughout the region and beyond, Plymouth is recognized as a progressive department that continually searches for better ways to approach policing.

Goldstein's list of accomplishments includes developing inroads with schools, faith communities, community organizations and residents of all backgrounds.

His areas of focus also include an elevated approach to officer hiring, wellness and training.

He has bolstered the region's ability to prepare and respond to critical incidents, established a mass emergency notification system in Plymouth, and has fortified the city to handle large-scale disasters.

Goldstein's guiding mantra remains a keystone in the way Plymouth approaches policing, and it is posted on plaques throughout the department: “If it is not illegal, immoral, unethical or against policy: Make it Happen.”

That guiding principle has helped create a safe community through high responsiveness and uncommon service.

Goldstein has also worked to develop his department into a magnet for officer talent – in a time when many agencies struggle to recruit, Plymouth is consistently able to hire the best and brightest.

“I could not be prouder of the women and men who serve this department with pride and excellence every day,” he said. “I'm extremely proud to be able to roll up my sleeves and work with these talented individuals.”

A Well-Earned Retirement

Goldstein said that his first priority after retirement is a long vacation and spending more time with his family.

Beyond that, he plans to continue working in various capacities such as consulting, security and promoting wellness for first responders.

Looking back on a successful career and long tenure in public safety leadership, Goldstein shared advice that he believes has served him well.

“There's always something to learn – get out of your lane of comfort to make new paths,” he said. “Cherish every minute, because you have no idea how fast it's going to go. If I could sum up in a word how I feel about the opportunity I've had to serve this community, it would be ‘gratitude.’”

Plymouth HRA offers zero-interest forgivable home rehab loans for qualified homeowners

The Plymouth Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) offers zero-interest deferred and forgivable Home Rehabilitation Loans of up to \$40,000 for qualified Plymouth homeowners.

The Home Rehabilitation Program assists low- and moderate-income owner-occupied households to maintain, repair and improve their homes. The zero-interest loans are 100% forgiven after 20 years – making this program especially helpful to residents who wish to remain in their home long-term.

In the last two years, 13 Plymouth households have used the Home Rehabilitation Program to address deferred maintenance. The loans have helped residents repair and replace roofs, bathrooms, windows and doors, HVAC systems, water heaters, and more.

The HRA encourages Plymouth residents with deferred home maintenance and repairs to inquire about the program.

Qualification Requirements

To qualify, Plymouth residents must own and occupy their home. Homes can be single-family, duplexes, townhomes or

condominiums. Homeowners must be current on mortgage or deed payments, property taxes, and homeowners association dues (if applicable). They must not exceed set annual income limits.

Loan Repayment

The HRA forgives Home Rehabilitation Loans after 20 years. If the homeowner sells, transfers or no longer homesteads the home within 10 years, the loan must be 100% repaid. After 10 years, the loan principal declines 10% each year until the HRA forgives the loan at 20 years.

How It Works

Applicants meet with HRA staff to review the Home Rehabilitation Program and determine eligibility. Once approved, a certified city inspector works with the homeowner to determine and prioritize what work is needed. Homeowners are then responsible for securing bids from qualified contractors. Once the bid is selected, work begins. City inspectors will review all work upon completion to ensure quality and needs have been met.

For detailed guidelines and information or to apply, visit plymouthmn.gov/homerehab.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Volunteer!

The city is seeking volunteers who are:

Interested in reaching out and writing letters to people during the pandemic. Provide caring messages, pictures, jokes, puzzles and more to seniors and others through the Plymouth Post. Great family or group project.

Enthusiastic about winter sports. Take tickets at high school hockey games, if needed.

Experienced writers. Create regular blog or monthly newsletter for the Plymouth Historical Society. Can be done remotely. Previous writing experience preferred.

Reliable with winter clean up. Adopt a fire hydrant near your home to keep clear of snow so firefighters and fire equipment can gain quick access in the event of an emergency. For more information, visit plymouthmn.gov/adoptaspot.

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

Take a Closer Look



Violet Alvheim



Cheryl Moen

Violet Alvheim and Cheryl Moen

Finance volunteers

As volunteers, our jobs are to provide the Finance Division with clerical support for billing and mailings. We also assist other departments with fun assembly projects related to holidays and special events, filling in wherever we are needed.

Violet and Cheryl's favorite thing about being city volunteers is giving back to the community and making new friends.

“This finance project has been great to help with, as I worked in accounting before retirement,” Violet said. “Plus, you never know what you will be asked to do. There's always some interesting and creative activity being developed for our residents.”

Cheryl added, “I also enjoy getting to know city staff and learning about the different departments and services they provide to residents.”

Because Violet and Cheryl volunteer, the city can rely on trusted individuals who share their professional skills and expertise.

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Taking Shape

As of press time, construction is on schedule at the Creek Center site. Mild weather in November and early December facilitated work such as pouring concrete for the foundation and exterior walls. Heading into winter, the site will continue to take on a rough shape of what the new Plymouth Creek Center will look like.

“We are very excited for the future,” Recreation Manager Kari Hemp said. “Now that we can start to see parts of the new building form, it's creating a lot of excitement with staff and the public.”

Keep Up to Date

Visit plymouthmn.gov/pccproject to view construction updates and photos, project history, an overview video, current timelines, facility renderings, and more.



2021 Yard Waste Site, recycling dates

Curbside recycling collections will be one day late when the following holidays fall on a weekday (not on a weekend) on or before your collection day: New Year’s Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day. For details, visit plymouthmn.gov/recyclingschedule.

Drop-Off Day – This year, Drop-Off Day is set for Friday, April 23 and Saturday, April 24 at the Maintenance Facility, 14900 23rd Ave. N. When available, more information will be posted at plymouthmn.gov/dropoff.

Yard Waste Site Opens – Wednesday, April 7, weather permitting. The Yard Waste Site is closed on Mondays and Tuesdays, Easter, Independence Day and Thanksgiving Day. The Yard Waste Site will be closed Friday, April 23 and Saturday, April 24 for Drop-Off Day activities. For details, visit plymouthmn.gov/yardwaste. Please note that the City of Plymouth follows guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Minnesota Department of Health. Visitors to the Plymouth Yard Waste Site may experience delays and wait times – as guidelines are followed to accommodate safety and social distancing.

Recycling Drop-Off Site – Open daily. The site is located next to the Maintenance Facility, 14900 23rd Ave. N., and is available to Plymouth residents and small businesses located in Plymouth.

The site will be closed all day Friday, April 23 and Saturday, April 24 for Drop-Off Day activities.

plymouthmn.gov

SEASONAL SPOTLIGHT



Winter Parking/Plowing – To improve snow plowing efficiency, residents are reminded of the winter parking ordinance. Parking is prohibited on streets after a 2-inch snowfall until the street has been plowed to the curbs. Violators may be tagged and towed. Plymouth also has a year-round ordinance that prohibits parking on city streets 2-5 a.m.

Help make plowing operations more efficient:

- Place garbage and recycling containers 3 feet behind the curb in your driveway to prevent waste from being scattered if it is likely streets will be plowed on your collection day.
- Do not shovel, plow or blow snow into the street, which makes it more difficult to clear roadways, particularly cul-de-sacs.
- Please keep your mailbox clear of snow to ensure postal delivery.
- Please clear snow and ice around fire hydrants near your house.

For more information about snow removal operations, or to sign up for snow emergency eNotifications, visit plymouthmn.gov/snow.

Tree Trimming – Each year, the City of Plymouth hires a Tree Care Industry Association-accredited tree service to prune boulevard and park trees.

Ostvig Tree, Inc. will trim boulevard trees for street clearance and removal of hazardous and/or dead limbs. The trimming occurs through March and will be focused in the northeastern area of Plymouth.

Residents who trim their own boulevard trees should contact City Forester Paul Buck at 763-509-5944 or pbuck@plymouthmn.gov so they can be noted in the tree inventory.

Pruning of private trees is the responsibility of the respective property owners.

Pruning is recommended during dormancy (typically November through March) to avoid potential pest and disease problems.

Tree services with certified arborists on staff and adequate insurance are recommended.

Adopt A Hydrant – Through the Adopt a Hydrant program, the Plymouth Fire Department urges residents to shovel a 3-foot radius around fire hydrants after a snowfall.

Quick access to hydrants is crucial in a fire, as a fire engine's water supply depletes rapidly. The program helps eliminate the need for firefighters to dig a hydrant out of the snow and ice before it can be used in an emergency situation.

For more information on Adopt a Hydrant, visit plymouthmn.gov/adoptaspot or call 763-509-5120.

At the webpage, residents can learn about other ways to volunteer to benefit their neighborhoods and community as a whole by adopting parks, dog waste stations, storm drains and streets. A map can be viewed for users to check availability.

Plymouth continues to support businesses during pandemic

By Mayor Jeff Wosje

This past year has been increasingly challenging for Plymouth businesses. From global corporations to our small business community – they’ve all been impacted in some way by the COVID-19 pandemic. It’s imperative that we all do our part to support the people and companies that make up our vibrant economic sector. Plymouth is Minnesota’s fourth largest economy, and the city wouldn’t be what it is without the businesses that call this community home.

At the city, we’re proud to have awarded 73 grants to Plymouth businesses to assist with COVID-19 recovery, helping with expenses such as rent, utilities, payroll obligations, sanitization and personal protective equipment.

A total of \$728,300 was distributed, with most businesses receiving \$10,000. The grants were made possible by federal CARES Act funding and were given to a variety of businesses, including restaurants, retailers, entertainment establishments and more.

I’d like to take this opportunity to call on our residents to continue dining and shopping locally when possible. Now more than ever, our businesses need community support.

To help diners identify local options during the pandemic, the city website (plymouthmn.gov) features a list of Plymouth restaurants offering takeout, delivery and curbside options. I encourage anyone able and interested to explore the page and find new restaurants to try – there are a lot of great eateries in our community.

Plymouth is home to many fitness studios and gyms, which have also been hit especially hard during the pandemic. Many of these businesses offer classes virtually. During winter months, it’s important to stay active – consider doing so with the help of a Plymouth business.

As we continue to navigate the stages of this pandemic, please shop Plymouth first and support those who work, own businesses and invest in this great community.

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: Jan. 12, 26 and Feb. 9, 23
Planning Commission: Jan. 6, 20 and Feb. 3, 17

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