



## Primavera set for April 15-18

Primavera is set for April 15-18. Join the Plymouth Arts Council and the City of Plymouth in a celebration of fine art featuring local creatives. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, events and activities are subject to change and will include online components. For the most up-to-date details, visit [plymouthmn.gov/primavera](http://plymouthmn.gov/primavera).



## Walk with the Mayor on May 1

Join Mayor Jeff Wosje 9:30-10:30 a.m. Saturday, May 1 as he kicks off the annual Step to it Challenge with a walk at the Northwest Greenway. Due to the pandemic, event details are subject to change. The event will adhere to current health and safety guidelines.

For more information, visit [plymouthmn.gov](http://plymouthmn.gov).

## Market value notices arrive in March for taxes payable 2022

Market value notices for Plymouth properties will hit mailboxes in March. The notices list the assessed value of the property and its classification for taxes payable in 2022.

Property values affect how much tax residents pay each year. Residents with questions or concerns are encouraged to call an assessor at the contact information listed on the property valuation notice.

## Drop-Off Day set for April 23-24

Changes are coming this year to the popular Drop-Off Day, which will now be held over two days to allow for more efficient service and reduced wait times. Each day will offer collection of different items so residents should take note of which date best fits their needs.

Drop-Off Day activities are held at the Maintenance Facility, 14900 23rd Ave. N. This year's schedule is:

- 3-7 p.m. Friday, April 23 – Only items that are free to dispose/recycle will be collected
- 7:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Saturday, April 24 – Pay items and free items alike will be collected

Visit [plymouthmn.gov/dropoff](http://plymouthmn.gov/dropoff) for pricing and a list of accepted items for each day. The event is only available to Plymouth residents, and identification is required.

## With bids approved, construction is set to begin at Plymouth Fire Stations 2 and 3

In January, the City Council approved bids for upcoming projects at two of Plymouth's fire stations, setting the stage for construction to start this spring.

Fire Station 2 (12000 Old Rockford Road) and Fire Station 3 (3300 Dunkirk Lane N.) will undergo extensive changes in the months ahead. The changes are designed to accommodate adjustments to the Fire Department's staffing model, and to remedy deteriorating and restrictive conditions in both buildings. Station 2 (built 1977) will be torn down and rebuilt, while Station 3 (built 1989) will be renovated and expanded.

*Fire Stations ... continued on page 5*



*Fire Station 2 (project rendering above) will be torn down and rebuilt beginning this spring. Fire Station 3 will be expanded and renovated.*

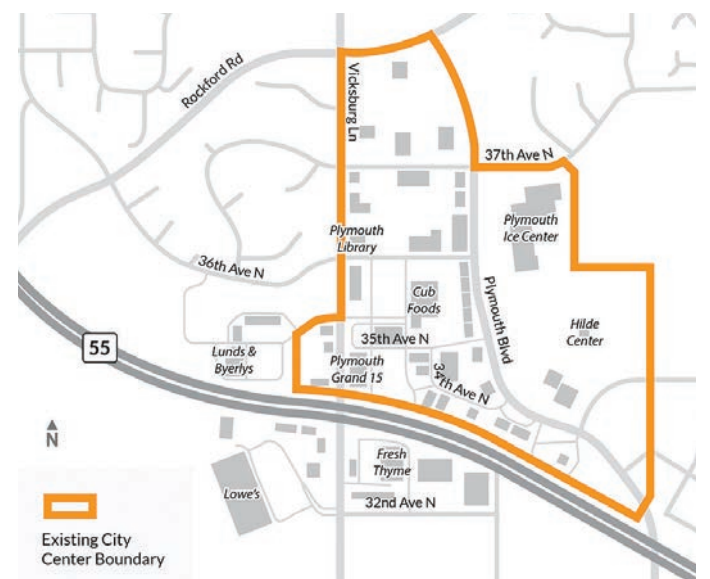
## City Center 2.0 study complete and presented to City Council, now available to view online

In late January, the City Council received the results of a study exploring options for a renewed vision of Plymouth's City Center.

The initiative, known as City Center 2.0, was first adopted by the City Council in 2019 with a goal of exploring opportunities for continued development and redevelopment of Plymouth's central corridor, which is the area roughly located one mile west of Interstate 494 and Highway 55.

Following a public engagement process and work by consultants Business Districts, Inc., GRAEF and Zan Associates, the study details the feedback gathered and recommendations for the project vision.

The City Center 2.0 study can be viewed in its entirety at [plymouthmn.gov/citycenter](http://plymouthmn.gov/citycenter).



*City Center 2.0 ... continued on page 6* City Center is roughly one mile west of Interstate 494 and Highway 55.

## Plymouth City Council Chambers updated, adding accessibility, connectivity and more



Plymouth recently completed an update of audio-visual technology in the Plymouth City Council Chambers.

The space, which holds City Council, Planning Commission, and other committees and commission meetings, was last updated 10 years ago. Updates completed this year include new cameras and microphones, an updated hearing assistance system, accessible public speaking accommodations, wireless

presentation connectivity, and new meeting broadcast equipment. Though the project began prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the new technology also improves the ability to hold hybrid and virtual meetings while maintaining public access and participation.

To view City Council and other City of Plymouth meetings, visit [plymouthmn.gov](http://plymouthmn.gov).

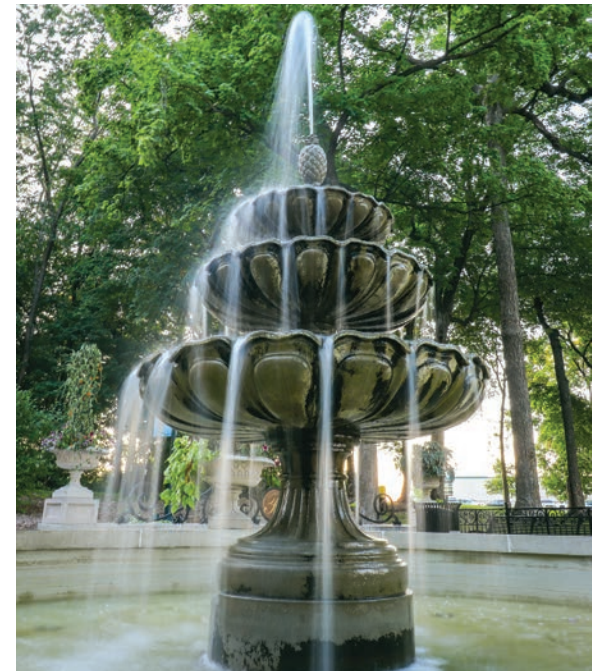


# Picture Plymouth Photo Contest winners

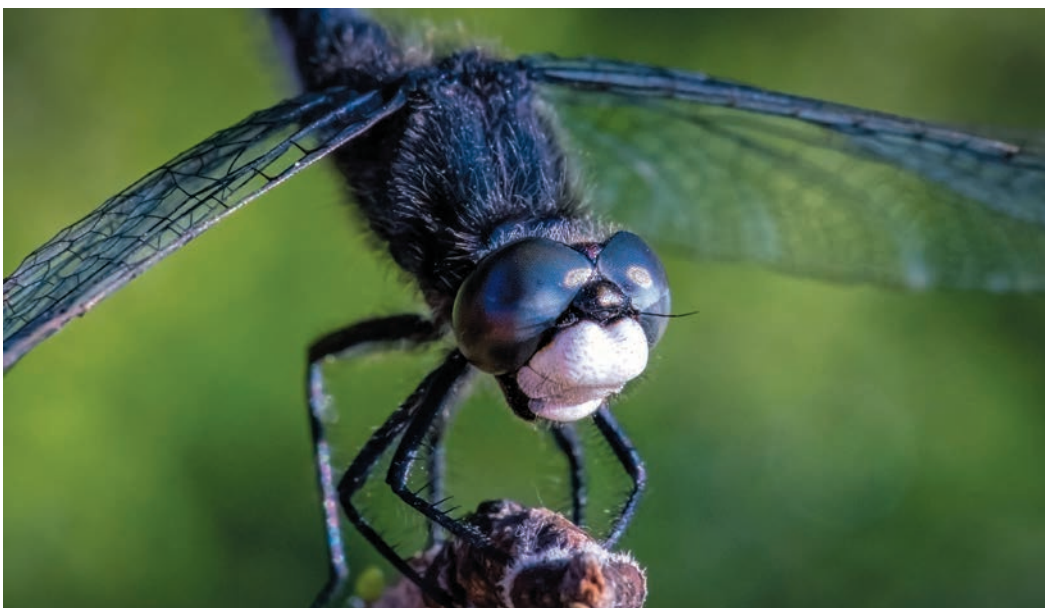
Visit [plymouthmn.gov/photocontest](http://plymouthmn.gov/photocontest) to view all winning photos. The contest is co-sponsored by the City of Plymouth and Plymouth Magazine.



Overall Winner/People and Families – “Social Distancing” by Bodhisatya Bhaduri



City Landmarks – “Hilde Fountain” by Donatella Pompeo



Wildlife and Nature – “A Moment of Repose” by Matthew Prior



Readers' Choice – “Spreading Her Wings – French Park” James Palmersheim



Activities and Events – “Enjoying the Seasons at Millennium Garden” by Troy Brantner



Pets – “What Yard Dreams Are Made Of” by Anna Berman

## SEASONAL SPOTLIGHT

**Yard Waste Site Opening** – The Yard Waste Site, 14900 23rd Ave. N., is set to open for the season Wednesday, April 7 – weather permitting. The site is open to Plymouth residents only – identification is required. In April, the site is open 3-8 p.m. Wednesday-Friday and 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. The Yard Waste Site is closed Friday, April 23 and Saturday, April 24 for Drop-Off Day activities. For details, visit [plymouthmn.gov/yardwaste](http://plymouthmn.gov/yardwaste).

**Plymouth READS** – Plymouth READS has announced “This Tender Land” by Minnesota author William Kent Krueger as its 2021 book selection. To learn more about details and events, visit [plymouthreads.org](http://plymouthreads.org).

**Water Main Flushing** – The city will flush water mains this spring based on the schedule below.

- **April 12-14:** Industrial areas, both sides of Interstate 494, south of Highway 55
- **April 12-28:** Residential areas west of I-494, except areas along both sides of County Road 47 west of I-494
- **May 3-18:** Residential areas east of I-494, and areas along both sides of County Road 47 west of I-494

To find out when your specific area will be flushed, check the map at [plymouthmn.gov/watermainflushing](http://plymouthmn.gov/watermainflushing) or call 763-509-5950 after Thursday, April 1. Your water may

be discolored throughout this time, but it is more likely while your specific area is flushed. Please avoid doing laundry at that time. If you have discolored water, let your outdoor water faucet run until the water is clear.

**Fieldhouse Walking** – Friday, April 16 is the last day for indoor walking at the Plymouth Creek Center Fieldhouse, 14800 34th Ave. N.

Due to the pandemic, walking track hours and availability are subject to change and may include registration and residency requirements.

Call the hotline at 763-509-5292 for the most current information about indoor walking at the fieldhouse.





## City reminds residents of ongoing Emerald Ash Borer spread as new hotspots appear

The City of Plymouth reminds residents that the invasive Emerald Ash Borer continues to infect trees in the area – and forestry staff has taken note of newly found hotspots within Plymouth.

The small, invasive insect infects ash trees and spreads quickly, typically killing most ash trees in its path. EAB was confirmed in Plymouth in 2015 and continues to be a threat to trees in the city.

### Hotspots Emerge

Over the past few years, city forestry staff has handled EAB infections sporadically throughout the city. However, in recent months, a handful of larger, more significant areas of EAB activity have been reported.

General areas with EAB clusters include:

- Highway 55 and Rockford Road
- Interstate 494 and Rockford Road
- Zachary Lane N. and Ridgemount Ave. N.

“As we work to manage these clusters, it’s very likely that there are more in the surrounding areas,” City Forester Paul Buck said. “Now more than ever, if you have ash trees on your property, it’s imperative to either treat or remove them.”

### A Good Time to Act

Now is a good time for residents to develop a plan if their trees are affected by EAB. Removal is recommended



As new hotspots emerge, residents with ash trees on their property are encouraged to plan for treatment or removal.

during the dormant season (October through April). This timing removes the largest volume of inactive larvae/ borers from the infestation area without dispersing them during transport to an approved disposal site. The City of Plymouth offers a tree replacement program for residents who remove ash trees.

If residents would like to attempt to save their trees, treatment is recommended in May-June. To learn more about EAB in Plymouth, and for information on developing a plan, visit [plymouthmn.gov/eab](http://plymouthmn.gov/eab).

## Starry stonewort in Medicine Lake: Help stop the spread of aquatic invasive species

Starry stonewort was discovered in Medicine Lake in 2018 and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and Three Rivers Park District have been treating the lake annually to help control the spread of this grassy invasive algae. Lake users are asked to clean watercraft to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species.

A threat to Minnesota waters, starry stonewort forms dense mats that can interfere with use of a lake for recreation, outcompetes and overtakes native plants and does not provide food, shelter or habitat for native fish and animals.

Each year, DNR and Three Rivers staff survey the lake and apply herbicides to the 15-acre patch of starry stonewort at the north end, near the French Regional Park boat launch.

The applications have been successful at reducing the overall amount of the invasive plant, which improves recreation and reduces the chance it will spread to other area lakes. While treatments at the north end will continue 2021, the plant has spread to other areas of the lake and will necessitate continual monitoring.

### Help Prevent the Spread

Aquatic invasive plants are typically spread when fragments have not been properly cleaned from boats, personal watercraft, docks, boat lifts, anchors or other equipment.

Lake users are asked to follow Minnesota law to help prevent the spread of invasive species:

- Clean aquatic plants and animals from watercraft



Photo courtesy of Minnesota DNR

Starry stonewort and other aquatic invasive plants are typically spread when fragments are not cleaned from watercraft.

- Drain all water by removing drain plugs and keep drain plugs out while transporting watercraft
- Dispose of unwanted bait in the trash

Some invasive species are small and difficult to see. Before moving watercraft to another waterbody, take one or more of the following precautions:

- Spray with high-pressure water
- Rinse with very hot water (120 degrees for at least two minutes or 140 degrees for at least 10 seconds)
- Dry for at least five days

Details about starry stonewort and other aquatic invasive species are available at [mndnr.gov/ais](http://mndnr.gov/ais).

## ECO-NOTES

**Free Shredding** – Free paper shredding is available at Plymouth’s Drop-Off Day, 3-7 p.m. Friday, April 23 (free items only, including shredding) and 7:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Saturday, April 24 (free and pay items) at the Plymouth Maintenance Facility, 14900 23rd Ave. N. Paper is securely shredded and recycled. Plymouth residents only. For details, visit [plymouthmn.gov/dropoff](http://plymouthmn.gov/dropoff).



Plymouth collected 2,700 pounds of holiday lights during January’s holiday light recycling initiative, helping repurpose strands headed for a landfill.

**Holiday Light Recycling Recap** – The city’s recent holiday lights and extension cord recycling initiative gathered a total of 2,700 pounds of holiday lights and helped recover material that was otherwise headed for a landfill. At no cost to the city or residents, Plymouth coordinated with a vendor that takes strands, removes wire insulation and collects raw metals for recycling.

Holiday lights, wires and items with strings or strands are not accepted in curbside recycling bins, as they tangle and cause damage to recycling processing equipment.



Residents are encouraged to help reduce household waste by composting organics in their backyards.

**Composting/Recycling Organics** – In Hennepin County, more than 25% of trash by weight is compostable, recyclable organics. Items such as food scraps, non-recyclable paper products, food-soaked paper products and items labeled “compostable” could be removed from the waste stream and composted to create rich, black topsoil.

Residents can help divert organics from the landfill by composting in their backyard. Visit [plymouthmn.gov/compost](http://plymouthmn.gov/compost) for details. Alternately, residents may discuss options for organics recycling with their garbage hauler. For a list of licensed garbage haulers in Plymouth, visit [plymouthmn.gov/garbagehaulers](http://plymouthmn.gov/garbagehaulers).

## City sells trees, shrubs through May 1

The City of Plymouth’s annual low-cost Tree and Shrub Sale is open through May 1 at [plymouthmn.gov/treesale](http://plymouthmn.gov/treesale).

City staff selects trees, shrubs and fruit-bearing plants each year that are well adapted to local growing conditions and resistant to pests and diseases. Supplies are limited.

Most trees are bare root and 5-6 feet tall at time of purchase. Orders must be picked up May 7-8 at the Plymouth Maintenance Facility, 14900 23rd Ave. N.

### Get Help Choosing Plants

Learn more about this year’s selection of trees and shrubs by watching a preview video featuring city forestry staff, available at [plymouthmn.gov/treesale](http://plymouthmn.gov/treesale).



A variety of low-cost trees and shrubs, such as the Harvest Gold Crabapple, are available online through May 1.

## Low-cost rain barrels, compost bins for sale

To promote environmental stewardship, the city has partnered with the Recycling Association of Minnesota to sell low-cost rain barrels and compost bins.

Orders must be placed online at [recycleminnesota.org](http://recycleminnesota.org) by Thursday, May 6. Orders must be picked up between 8 a.m. and noon Saturday, May 8 at the Plymouth Maintenance Facility, 14900 23rd Ave. N.

Cost to purchase a compost bin through this sale is \$66. Cost to purchase a 45-gallon rain barrel is \$79.

Rain barrels help conserve water by capturing rain and stormwater runoff to use for landscaping. Using a compost bin reduces waste and provides natural fertilizer for gardens.





# New street sweeper helps Plymouth protect water quality

Street and parking lot sweeping is recognized by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency as an effective practice for reducing contamination of surface waterbodies. To bolster efforts to protect water quality in Plymouth, the city purchased a new, more effective street sweeper in 2020.

The city's new regenerative air street sweeper excels at capturing fine sediment, salt and small debris that isn't typically picked up by standard mechanical broom sweepers – offering a more effective collection of pollutants. Because it benefits water quality, funding to offset the cost of the purchase was provided by area watershed organizations, including Bassett Creek, Elm Creek and Shingle Creek.

In addition to cleaning up solids like gravel, sand and trash, the new sweeper helps prevent chlorides (salts) and nutrients, such as phosphorus and nitrogen, from entering surface water, where they encourage excessive algae growth and harm fish, plants and wildlife.

"The new sweeper allows for responsive cold weather sweeping, which is a major benefit to waterbodies," said



The new sweeper effectively collects pollutants such as fine sediment, salt and debris not captured by standard machines.

Water Resources Supervisor Ben Scharenbroich. "City staff can quickly sweep salt spills and clean key streets before the runoff from snowmelt carries it into Plymouth's lakes, streams and wetlands."

Increased street sweeping allows the city to work toward surface water quality goals set by the MPCA and the Environmental Protection Agency.



The city is seeking volunteers for a variety of Earth-friendly outdoor activities, including adopting a garden, pulling garlic mustard or marking storm drains to protect water quality.

## Volunteer for the environment

Roll up those sleeves and pitch in around the city. While the pandemic has limited social events, plenty of Earth-friendly outdoor volunteer opportunities are available.

To get involved or for information about volunteering, email Volunteer Services at [volunteer@plymouthmn.gov](mailto:volunteer@plymouthmn.gov), call 763-509-5230 or visit [plymouthmn.gov/volunteer](http://plymouthmn.gov/volunteer).

### Summer Tween Volunteer Program

With activities led by city staff and volunteers May-August, this program offers an introduction to volunteering for "tweens," ages 11-13.

Participants can join a variety of active outdoor opportunities that support the community, including pulling garlic mustard, picking up trash on trails with active seniors and marking storm drains to protect water quality. Space is limited and registration is required.

### Drop-Off Day – Friday-Saturday, April 23-24

Lend a hand to direct traffic, or count and sort recyclable objects brought in by residents. Open to teens and adults.

### Plant and Pull Day – Saturday, May 22

Grab some gardening gloves and help plant flowers to beautify Plymouth city parks and buildings, or pull invasive garlic mustard from woodland areas. Open to teens, adults, families and groups.

### Garlic Mustard Removal

Help remove this invasive plant from parks and trails this spring and summer. Work alone or organize a group event with family, neighbors or scouts at a nearby park. Contact Volunteer Services to log volunteer hours. To help with identification and removal, view a video at [plymouthmn.gov/volunteeropportunities](http://plymouthmn.gov/volunteeropportunities).

### Adopt a Dog Waste Station, Storm Drain

Adopt a park, garden, dog waste station, fire hydrant, storm drain or street to keep Plymouth clean and safe. View a map to find which spots are available for adoption at [plymouthmn.gov/adoptaspot](http://plymouthmn.gov/adoptaspot).

### Storm Drain Marking

Mark neighborhood storm drains to remind passersby that storm water and debris drains straight into wetlands and lakes untreated, which can pollute the water. This opportunity offers flexibility and is a great family or scout project.

## Pursue environmental ed

A variety of environmental education opportunities and resources are available for Plymouth residents interested in learning about ways they can protect the environment and become better stewards of the Earth. View details about these programs and resources at the links below:

- Master Gardener – [hennepinmastergardeners.org](http://hennepinmastergardeners.org)
- Water Steward – [minnesotawaterstewards.org](http://minnesotawaterstewards.org)
- Backyard composting – [hennepin.us/composting](http://hennepin.us/composting)
- Organics recycling – [hennepin.us/organics](http://hennepin.us/organics)
- Disposal options – [hennepin.us/green-disposal-guide](http://hennepin.us/green-disposal-guide)
- Master Recycler – [hennepin.us/residents/recycling-hazardous-waste/become-master-recycler](http://hennepin.us/residents/recycling-hazardous-waste/become-master-recycler)

## Residents asked to keep Recycling Drop-Off Site clean, only bring accepted recyclable materials

Plymouth residents and small businesses may use the Recycling Drop-Off Site – located next to the Plymouth Maintenance Facility, 14900 23rd Ave. N. – but those who use the site are asked to adhere to the rules.

The site is for recyclable materials only – please do not bring trash, plastic bags, Polystyrene/Styrofoam™, paint, furniture or bulky items to the site. These items cause problems at the recycling plant and incur additional costs.

The site is free. It is available only for Plymouth residents and small businesses located in Plymouth. The Recycling Drop-Off Site is monitored by cameras to help prevent illegal dumping and promote appropriate use. Please break down boxes and help keep the facility clean. Visit [plymouthmn.gov](http://plymouthmn.gov) for a list of accepted recyclables.



The Recycling Drop-Off Site is for recyclable materials only – no trash, paint, plastic bags, furniture or bulky items are allowed.

For items not accepted at the Recycling Drop-Off Site, visit [hennepin.us/green-disposal-guide](http://hennepin.us/green-disposal-guide) to view disposal options.

## IN BRIEF AND HAPPENINGS

**Resilient Yards Virtual Workshop** – 6-8:30 p.m. Thursday, March 25. Plymouth residents are invited to learn how to change their yards to create resilience and combat water pollution. Free for Plymouth residents, the virtual Blue Thumb/Metro Blooms workshop features landscape designers who teach the use of site planning, raingardens, turf alternatives, trees, other plantings and more. One-on-one design assistance from landscape designers is available, as well as guidance from Hennepin County Master Gardeners and Master Water Stewards.

To register for the workshop, call 651-699-2426 or visit [metroblooms.org/workshops](http://metroblooms.org/workshops). Virtual meeting instructions will be provided upon registration.

**Water Efficiency Rebate Program** – To encourage water conservation, the City of Plymouth offers rebates for completing water efficiency improvement projects. Property owners must apply for the rebates, which are awarded on a first-come, first-served basis.

Eligible projects may include replacing existing inefficient devices with WaterSense or Energy Star devices, or completing an irrigation system audit. All residential and commercial property owners who are customers of the municipal water supply could be eligible. For more information about rebate amounts and eligibility, or to obtain an application, visit [plymouthmn.gov/waterefficiencyrebate](http://plymouthmn.gov/waterefficiencyrebate).

## Pick up leaves, pet waste to prevent water pollution

Proper disposal of pet waste, grass clippings and leaves impacts the health of local waterbodies – and residents are encouraged to adopt practices that protect Plymouth's lakes, streams and wetlands.

Pet owners must clean up after their pets – it's the law. Even in a residential backyard, pet waste left behind is washed into lakes and streams. Waste should be placed in the garbage, not composted.

Dog waste contains harmful bacteria, parasites and viruses that pollute water bodies and can cause illness. Pet waste breaks down differently than wild animal waste, as it contains excess nutrients – which can contribute to algae blooms.

### Do Not Put Grass or Leaves in the Street

Residents should not blow or rake grass clipping or leaves into the street or waterways. Not only is it illegal, it harms water quality. Materials left in the street are washed into storm drains and deposited into Plymouth's waterbodies.



Leaves and grass clippings left in the street, and abandoned pet waste, washes away and pollutes lakes, streams and wetlands.

Instead, residents may leave grass and leaves on the lawn, which add nutrients and can reduce the need for fertilizers. Yard waste, except for grass clippings, may be dropped off at the Plymouth Yard Waste Site, open April-November. For hours and information, visit [plymouthmn.gov/yardwaste](http://plymouthmn.gov/yardwaste).



## Hometown officer Erik Fadden begins work as the city's new public safety director/police chief

The City of Plymouth recently named Erik Fadden as its new public safety director/police chief following the retirement of Mike Goldstein at the end of January.

Fadden was raised in Plymouth and graduated from Wayzata High School. He served as a Plymouth Police Reserve in 1998 while attending college.

He became a Plymouth police officer in 2004, was promoted to sergeant in 2009 and was named deputy police chief in 2018.

Fadden said he sought the position because of his hometown ties and because of the work of his predecessor.

"I have always been invested in Plymouth – it's my home," Fadden said. "Plymouth has a reputation for being a professional and progressive police department. I'm honored to take on the challenge of maintaining the department's legacy and building on it with the help of our outstanding team."

He noted that an immediate priority is continuing to navigate the pandemic, and ensuring staff have what they need to stay physically and mentally healthy.

Another priority is continuing to develop and foster community trust.



Erik Fadden

Fadden holds a bachelor's degree in law enforcement from Minnesota State University, Mankato. He has also pursued professional studies at Northwestern University in Evanston, Ill. and the Police Executive Research Forum in Washington, D.C.

As director, Fadden will lead the Public Safety Department, which encompasses the Plymouth Police and Fire departments, as well as emergency management services.

In the role, Fadden will be responsible for the overall administration, strategic planning and financial oversight of the department.

"The world is changing, as is how it looks at law enforcement," he said. "We need to be at the table when these conversations are happening, and we need to be open and available for people to ask tough questions so we can be a legitimate partner in the community."

Fadden holds a bachelor's degree in law enforcement

## Construction season brings a variety of projects

Construction projects are coming to Plymouth roadways, and in all cases, motorists are asked to pay close attention to signage and provide crews enough room to work safely.

### Ridgemount Avenue

At the southern border of Plymouth, Ridgemount Avenue from Vinewood Lane to County Road 73 will undergo a significant rehabilitation project beginning this spring. Sunset Trail north of Ridgemount will serve as the detour route during construction. Construction on the project is expected to last through October.

### 2020 Street Reconstruction Project

The second phase of the 2020 Street Reconstruction Project begins this year and includes the Beacon Heights neighborhood and other select streets east of Medicine Lake, including 17th Avenue adjacent to East Medicine Lake Park.

Roadways involved in the project will be completely rebuilt and will include related work such as concrete curb and gutter, storm sewer and water main rehab/replacement. Construction is expected to occur spring through fall.

### 2021 Street Reconstruction Project

This year's reconstruction project involves select streets north and south of County Road 6 between Vicksburg Lane and County Road 101. Roadways involved in the project will be completely rebuilt and will include related work such as concrete curb and gutter, storm sewer and water main rehab/replacement. Construction is expected to occur summer and fall.

### 2021 Street Rehabilitation Project

Street rehabilitation projects will occur throughout the construction season and will affect a number of Plymouth neighborhoods. Rehabilitation may include mill and overlay, street reclamation and/or other peripheral work. Areas impacted include the Deerwood neighborhood, the Fazendin neighborhood, the area around Medina Road between Niagara Lane N. and Vicksburg Lane N., and the area around 51st Avenue N. and Nathan Lane N. Projects are expected to occur summer through fall.

Visit [plymouthmn.gov/project-spotlight](http://plymouthmn.gov/project-spotlight) for more about the projects above, or to sign up for eNotification emails.

## HRA assists homeowners, first-time buyers

With warm weather around the corner, now is the time many homeowners and first-time buyers plan on renovations or new home purchases.

The City of Plymouth and the Plymouth Housing and Redevelopment Authority offer several programs and services to help long-time and first-time homeowners achieve their housing goals.

To learn more about any of the programs below, or additional HRA offerings, visit [plymouthmn.gov/hra](http://plymouthmn.gov/hra) or call 763-509-5410.

### First-Time Homebuyer Loans

Buying a home for the first time can be daunting, and many hurdles can get in the way of prospective homeowners. To help qualifying buyers, the HRA offers zero-interest loans of up to \$35,000 to offset down payment and closing costs. Those interested in the program are encouraged to contact the HRA early in the home-buying process. For details, visit [plymouthmn.gov/firsthome](http://plymouthmn.gov/firsthome).

### Home Rehabilitation Loans

Zero-interest loans are available for qualifying applicants in low- and moderate-income households. The home rehabilitation loan program offers deferred zero-interest loans of up to \$40,000 to help residents make necessary repairs to their home, as well as qualifying safety and energy efficiency upgrades. The

loans are 100% forgiven if the homeowner remains in the home for 20 years after receiving the loan. Work may include new roofing, siding, windows, electrical, plumbing and insulation. Other repairs may be eligible. Visit [plymouthmn.gov/homerehab](http://plymouthmn.gov/homerehab) for more information.

### Emergency Repair Program for Seniors

The Emergency Repair Program assists Plymouth homeowners ages 55 and older with making emergency updates to their homes. Assistance up to \$7,500 is available for residents who meet household income limits. Visit [plymouthmn.gov/emergencyrepair](http://plymouthmn.gov/emergencyrepair) for more information about the program.

### Home Energy Squad

In partnership with the Center for Energy and Environment, CenterPoint Energy and Xcel Energy, the HRA offers home energy consultations to Plymouth residents. Residents can sign up for a customized home visit from a team of energy professionals who will identify ways to save energy in the home.

While visits are traditionally held in-person, Xcel Energy and CenterPoint Energy are currently offering free Virtual Home Energy Squad visits to help Minnesotans save energy while also staying safe.

For more information or to schedule a visit, call 651-328-6220 or visit [mncee.org/home-energy-squad](http://mncee.org/home-energy-squad).

## MAKE A DIFFERENCE

# Volunteer!

The city is seeking volunteers who are:

**Experienced writers and photo editors.** Provide grant writing support to various departments, write blog articles for Plymouth Historical Society, and crop and edit historic photos.

**Interested in serving as Police Reserve volunteers.** Must be 21 years or older, commit to 15 hours a month, have a clean driving record and pass a background check.

**Passionate about the environment.** Remove invasive garlic mustard from parks. Adopt a park, garden or storm drain. Weed, water and deadhead the Millennium Garden. Participate in Drop-Off Day, Tree and Shrub Sale, and Plant and Pull Day.

**Teens who want to get involved.** Build leadership skills and gain work experience while assisting with a variety of recreation programs. Apply by Saturday, April 17. The application fee is \$15. A mandatory training session is set for Wednesday, June 16.

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

## Take a Closer Look



Andy Bowe

Jackie Uglow

### Andy Bowe and Jackie Uglow

Solid Waste and Recycling volunteers

**As volunteers, our job is** to be city ambassadors for its solid waste reduction initiatives. We contact schools, religious organizations and nonprofits about current use of recycling and organics based on Hennepin County requirements. We also educate the public and assist with Drop-Off Day (see page 1).

**Andy and Jackie's favorite thing about being city volunteers is** giving back to the community as environmental stewards and sharing the knowledge they gained through the Hennepin County Master Recycler program.

Andy said, "I'm excited about this opportunity to become a more active part of the community."

Jackie added, "I enjoy meeting new people and the creative volunteering opportunities that match my skills and interests. This recycling project is a perfect example of that."

**Because Andy and Jackie volunteer,** education and outreach about organics and recycling will be provided to organizations, helping community members become better environmental stewards.

## Fire Stations ... from page 1

Over the past few years, Plymouth has transitioned from a paid-on-call model to a staffing model that includes full-time firefighters working 24-hour shifts. Because of this change, new facilities are needed to provide residence spaces for firefighters, such as kitchens, dayrooms and dorms. Other project goals are to modernize the technologically out-of-date stations, address a range of firefighter health issues, provide improved training facilities, and enhance the city's overall public safety and emergency preparedness.

As construction gets underway, work will be phased so that service from both stations can be maintained throughout the process. Visit [plymouthmn.gov/firestationprojects](http://plymouthmn.gov/firestationprojects) for more information.



## City Center 2.0 ... from page 1

### Gathering Input and Information

Beginning in early 2020, the public engagement process was adapted due to the pandemic and included online surveys through platforms such as FlashVote and Social Pinpoint. The city also held virtual workshops with stakeholders in the area.

Participants were asked to share their thoughts about the City Center's current attractions, suggestions for improvements, activities and features they like in the area, types of shopping and businesses they frequent, features they would like added, and more.

### Study Results

Information included in the study ranges from potential development, navigation improvements, place-making efforts, beautification, safety and more. Following the study presentation, City Council gave staff direction to continue

exploring potential action the city could take to facilitate the City Center 2.0 vision, such as zoning and guidance amendments.

### First Steps in a Long Process

City Center 2.0 is not a single project that will transform the area, but rather a city-guided, developer-driven overarching vision that would advance the initiative's goals over the course of coming decades. Overall, the intention is to create a vibrant, viable, visually appealing and financially successful mixed-used infill development plan that enhances the character of City Center.

"The idea of City Center 2.0 is to develop a framework to help guide new development and encourage redevelopment in a coordinated effort that allows current and potential property owners to be creative with opportunities," said Economic Development Manager Danette Parr.

Keep up to date, learn more about project background and sign up for eNotifications at [plymouthmn.gov/citycenter](http://plymouthmn.gov/citycenter).

## Helen LaFave, creator of Plymouth News, retires

For the past 34 years, Communications Manager Helen LaFave has steadily served the City of Plymouth as it has grown from a community with a significant amount of rural area to the state's seventh most populous city.



Helen LaFave

LaFave was hired in 1987 as the city's first communicator. As a

one-person shop for several years, LaFave has since grown the Communications Division into a four-person team.

In the early days, LaFave established traditional communications channels, such as media releases and the bimonthly Plymouth News. Since then, she has led the effort to forge and maintain a comprehensive and modern network of digital communications channels for Plymouth, including the city website, eight social media platforms, an employee intranet, eNotifications, Alert Plymouth, FlashVote, myPlymouth and more.

Since LaFave was hired, Plymouth has more than doubled its population. LaFave followed the progress as it happened, sharing information and stories with the public through an everchanging media landscape.

"It's a job that has always challenged me – it has never grown old," said LaFave. "The community has been constantly changing, and communications technology and tools have done the same. I'm proud of the solid and well-respected communications program we have built."

## Valor Place to provide housing for veterans

The Plymouth Housing and Redevelopment Authority plans to build a twin home on the vacant land at the northeast corner of Rockford Road and Fernbrook Lane. The parcel is the future site of Valor Place – a two-unit development designed to provide stable and affordable housing for U.S. military veterans.

Owned and managed by the HRA, the rental units will be available to veterans and their families who meet income limits and other eligibility requirements. To make Valor Place possible, the HRA is partnering with several area nonprofit organizations, including Plymouth Beyond the Yellow Ribbon and the Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans.

Each unit will be about 1,800 square feet and feature three bedrooms, two bathrooms, a full kitchen, a two-car garage and more.

Subsequent to approval, construction on the homes could begin this spring and be completed this fall.



Rendering of the proposed Valor Place development in Plymouth

"We see this as a great opportunity to offer veterans an affordable option for quality housing," said HRA Manager Jim Barnes. "It's also a benefit to the broader community as we diversify our housing stock."

To learn more about the project, email the Plymouth HRA at [housing@plymouthmn.gov](mailto:housing@plymouthmn.gov).

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## City Council sets goals for 2021

By Mayor Jeff Wosje

As we look ahead at the coming year, we know that we will continue to face challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

However, Plymouth is in a good position to come out as strong – or stronger – than when we entered the pandemic last year.

To help guide our decision making in the coming year, the City Council adopted a list of goals for 2021, filled with objectives, initiatives and priorities.

While we adopt goals each year, this year's initiatives feel especially crucial as we look to the future and position ourselves to continue building Plymouth's outstanding quality of life and value-driven, high-quality services.

2021 City Council goals:

- Protect Plymouth's strong financial position
- Monitor economic conditions
- Provide efficient and effective services
- Promote transportation solutions
- Continue final segments of the Northwest Greenway
- Implement environmental initiatives
- Implement proactive public safety initiatives
- Protect the city's infrastructure investment
- Consider development and redevelopment requests
- Develop a renewed vision for City Center

In addition to the goals above, the City Council also adopted 2021 legislative priorities, which are intended to advocate specifically for Plymouth residents and businesses, avoid duplication of services, and enable the city to govern itself.

This year's priorities include three main categories – transportation, general government and fiscal reform.

For more information about each goal and legislative priority, visit [plymouthmn.gov/goals](http://plymouthmn.gov/goals).

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

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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: March 9, 23 and April 13, 27

Planning Commission: March 17 and April 7, 21

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