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Your Weekly Source for City News and Information

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## Public Meetings Next Week:

- Planning Commission Meeting  
Monday, February 26th, 7:00 p.m.

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## NOTICE OF MEETING

The City of Lake Elmo  
Planning Commission will conduct a meeting on  
**Monday February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2024**  
**at 7:00 p.m.**

### AGENDA

1. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Approve Agenda
3. Approve Minutes of February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024
4. Public Hearing
  - a) **Peanut Poppy's Ranch Minor Subdivision and Easement Vacation.** Lucy Wegscheider has submitted a minor subdivision application and easement vacation application to consolidate seven parcels (PIDs: 11.029.21.21.0001, 11.029.21.22.0002, 02.029.21.34.0005, 02.029.21.34.0001, 02.029.21.33.0004, 11.029.21.21.0002, 11.029.21.0003) and vacate existing roadway easements which would then be split into two parcels with new road right of way dedicated.
  - b) **United Rentals Conditional Use Permit.** United Rentals has submitted a conditional use permit application for a sales and storage lot facility on the property located at 11144 Stillwater Blvd.
5. New/Unfinished Business
  - a) CEF Solar Farm Conditional Use Permit Extension Request
6. Communications/Updates
  - a) City Council Updates – 2/20/2024
    - i. At Home Apartments
    - ii. Housekeeping Amendments Pt 2
  - b) Upcoming Meetings
    - i. March 11<sup>th</sup> 2024
    - ii. March 25<sup>th</sup> 2024
7. Adjourn

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**Full meeting packets and meeting minutes can be accessed here:**  
[Agendas and Minutes](#)

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### **A Message from Mayor Cadenhead about the Proposed Site for a New Elementary School**

I would like to shed some light on the process and considerations for the proposed site for a new elementary school that would replace Lake Elmo Elementary. The current school has served our community for over 100 years, and I am in support of building a new facility to provide a better learning environment for our students. Because of the complexity of multiple factors in play, we must understand the process, roles, responsibilities, and considerations that lay ahead.

#### **Discussions / Process Thus Far**

The School District, Lake Elmo City Staff, and members of the Council, had two meetings prior to the bond vote to discuss potential sites that could fit the needs for a new Elementary School to replace Lake Elmo Elementary. While all the sites identified during that discussion have possibilities, the School District needed to make a decision based on what was known at the time. As with any development project, stakeholders may be aware of some issues, but until due diligence is completed, the exhaustive list cannot be known.

Of the four sites they considered, we discussed known contamination issues, water and septic

considerations, potential traffic impacts, and dependencies on other development projects which will be explained in more detail below. Additionally, School District 834 has expressed interest in building the new school further south due to housing growth in the southern part of our district and the future impact on the student population. Based on all of these factors, the School District felt the best location for the new school was on the northwest corner of Lake Elmo Avenue and 10<sup>th</sup> Street. Voters were informed of the intent to build in that location, a sign was posted on the parcel, and the referendum passed. At this time, the School District has indicated that they do not have any other locations in Lake Elmo under consideration.

It may seem as though this process is taking a long time. The process is being followed as it should with any development within the city to make sure that proper items are addressed between the developer and the city.

### **Process & Role Clarity**

It is known there are concerns about traffic, the proximity to the Oakdale Gun Club, access to water and sewer, and a potential loss of trees on the corner of Lake Elmo Avenue and 10<sup>th</sup> Street. It is helpful to understand the responsibilities of the City and also the developer (The District) to provide role clarity. Not only does this help us proceed with intentional conversation, but it also aligns with our obligations to each other and the community.

As the project owner, The District is responsible for assessing and mitigating issues related to their development project. This could include factors such as the layout of the building, proximity to the gun range, the up-front and on-going expenses of the project, etc.

The city will, in turn, work with the school district through navigating the requirements to re-zone the land, how to comply with city ordinances just as it would be needed in any other municipality. While the City Staff and Council members can share insights about different parcels of land, it is ultimately the district's decision about how to proceed – as long as the process steps are met.

With that, there are a few complicating factors that we will need to work through together. It is important to me as the Mayor of Lake Elmo, to educate our community about the various agencies and processes that we need to comply with. This is challenging, that's for sure. But it can be done.

**MUSA** - In addition to City Zoning and City Code compliance, we also are governed by the Metro Utility Service Area (MUSA). **The MUSA is governed by the MET council. They operate the sewer system for the entire metro area.** To have a connection to sanitary sewer, as opposed to a self-contained septic system (Oakland Junior High runs on a septic system), a building needs to be within the MUSA boundary. Lake Elmo's MUSA boundaries can be found in the 2040 Comprehensive Plan here: [https://www.lakeelmo.org/departments/planning\\_zoning/comprehensive\\_plan.php#outer-28](https://www.lakeelmo.org/departments/planning_zoning/comprehensive_plan.php#outer-28).

**Zoning** - To build a new school, any parcel of land in consideration would need to be zoned as 'Institutional.' Right now, the parcel of land slated for the new elementary school is zoned as agricultural. For a zoning change or a MUSA boundary change, at the City Council level, there needs to be a motion and super majority vote to accomplish the changes at a City Council meeting. This means that the Lake Elmo City Council would need 4 out of 5 members to vote in the affirmative to make a change to the MUSA and/or the zoning designation. Please note the zoning change would be needed for any location that the district would have chosen for an elementary school site.

**Technical Considerations** – If approved, the realities of the site and the complexities are something that the City and School District have been working on finding solutions to and work through.

1 - Roadway improvements to CSAH 17 (Lake Elmo Avenue) and CSAH 10 (10<sup>th</sup> Street) will need to be made to maintain safe traffic flow. Many schools throughout the country are on busy roadways. In fact, the average daily traffic on Stillwater Blvd, in front of the current school, is currently higher than the average daily traffic on 10<sup>th</sup> Street. With this potential development, Washington County does not have anything in their Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for work on the roadways in that area at this time.

2 - Sewer hook-up (MUSA) or a septic solution (outside of MUSA), are not as easy as it may seem on the face of it. The sewer that was installed along Lake Elmo Avenue to serve the MUSA area in the Old Village area is active north of 30<sup>th</sup> Street and then is a force main to a manhole all the way south to 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue (south Cimarron). To bring sewer to the NW quadrant of CSAH 10/CSAH 17 about 4000' of pipe and a lift station would need to be installed. This would be at a cost of about \$1.1 Million and would be a developer cost.

3 - I don't have an answer on how the School District plans on abating the noise from the Oakdale Gun Club. The primary note is to make sure that the development does not negatively affect the gun clubs ability to operate as they have for many years.

4 - The loss of trees has been discussed. From The City's perspective, the development of that area would need to comply with the ordinances of the City just like any other development.

### **Current State / Looking Ahead**

As previously mentioned, zoning change and MUSA boundary are the first two items to get determined by the city to make it possible for a public institution use. On Monday 2/12/24, after a lengthy discussion, the Lake Elmo Planning Commission voted to not recommend a change to the zoning for the proposed site or include the parcel in question as part of the (MUSA). The Council reviews their recommendation in terms of its impact to MUSA and zoning designation and will vote on the proposed changes. Because I, along with other stakeholders, are also members of this community, it is critical that we have role clarity and are acting on behalf of the elected or appointed role that we play. I am grateful that we all care about doing the right thing. All of these things together, ensure we make the best decision long term – for our community as a whole.

This complex situation is going to require measured and thoughtful problem-solving. It requires that we keep a level head and uncover/evaluate all potential issues, possibilities, roadblocks, and long-term considerations. It requires a strong partnership and clear communication. As the mayor, I am committed to working with our partners to strive for a win/win situation as it relates to development in Lake Elmo. In the meantime, I hope to hear from community members and stakeholders – to listen to your requests and discuss your concerns. If this type of work interests you and you are a resident of Lake Elmo, please consider serving on one of the Commissions/committees in the city. I have made it a goal to educate our community in the process of city development. Please contact me at [ccadenhead@lakeelmo.org](mailto:ccadenhead@lakeelmo.org). It is important to get this right.

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## 2024 Presidential Primary Election Tuesday, March 5, 2024

### Early & absentee voting begins next week

In-person absentee voting will begin  
January 19 and run through March 4.  
at Vote Centers:



- Cottage Grove Service Center: 13000 Ravine Parkway, Cottage Grove.
- Forest Lake Headwaters Service Center: 19955 Forest Road N, Forest Lake.
- Washington County Government Center: 14949 62nd Street. N., Stillwater.
- Woodbury City Hall: 8301 Valley Creek Road, Woodbury.

Starting February 16, in-person absentee voting will also be available at  
Oakdale City Hall, 1584 Hadley Ave. N., Oakdale.

Hours:

Monday - Friday: 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Saturday, March 2: 8 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Monday, March 4: 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

## POLLING LOCATION CHANGE

**PLEASE NOTE:** Lake Elmo residents in Precinct 1 who have voted at the fire station in the past will now vote at the new Lake Elmo City Center located at 3880 Laverne Avenue North. Residents who vote at the old City Hall Building at 3800 Laverne Avenue North will continue to vote at that location.

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## Paper Shredding Events

Washington County offers free paper shredding events for confidential papers at the Environmental Center. Documents will

be shredded on-site by Shred Right and recycled.

These events are free and open to residents and businesses. Limit: 6 boxes (weighing no more than 30lbs each) per person.



Events are on Wednesdays at the Washington County Environmental Center from 8am-4:30pm

2024 Dates:

- April 17
- May 22
- June 26
- August 14
- September 25
- November 13

## Winter Parking

Please remember that the City of Lake Elmo has a winter parking ordinance that **prohibits parking on city streets from November 1st through March 31st between 2:00 a.m. and 7:00 a.m.** This gives crews a window of time for clearing streets curb to curb more efficiently. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation!





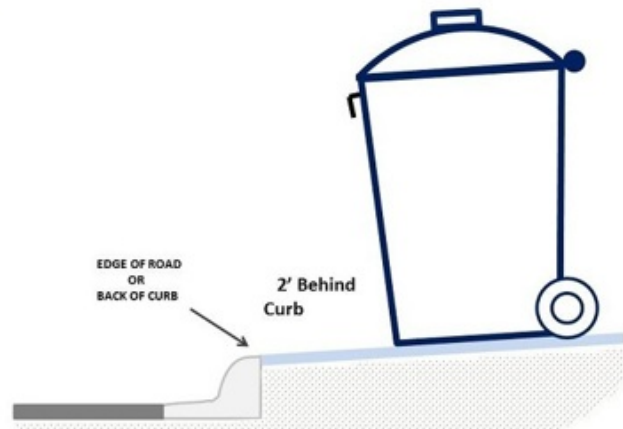
# Garbage/Recycling Containers



**Please Do Not place garbage cans in the street.** We realize this cleared area is an enticing location to place garbage cans, but they create hazards as they narrow the driving lanes, restrict visibility of pets, children, pedestrians and cars backing out of driveways. Most garbage trucks are equipped with a hydraulic extending arm that grasps garbage cans. It is recommended that garbage cans be placed at least 3 to 5 feet off the edge of pavement, into your driveway, so they are out of the way of the snowplow or snow being pushed aside while the snowplow



These tips can make garbage collection day safer for everyone. The City of Lake Elmo Thanks you for taking time to read this message!



## Exterior storage, parking and maintenance

As part of our ongoing efforts to maintain the appeal and safety of the City of Lake Elmo, city staff would like to remind residents about regulations pertaining to exterior storage, parking, and upkeep of properties. The way we manage our spaces is

important for maintaining our city's quintessential character.



**Exterior Storage:** All refuse, rubbish, or garbage (as defined in LEC 1.08) shall be kept in an enclosed building or properly contained in a closed container designed for the purposes. The accumulation, storing, or keeping of old machinery, wrecked or inoperable vehicles or household appliances, and unlicensed vehicles and other junk or debris is prohibited.

**Parking:** Unlicensed passenger vehicles and trucks shall not be parked in residential districts for a period exceeding seven days.

**Parking Design and Maintenance:** Surfacing and drainage. All off-street parking areas shall be surfaced as follows: Single-family and two-family dwellings shall provide a durable surface with suitable drainage. In all residential, commercial, and mixed-use districts, all areas intended to be utilized for parking space for five or more vehicles and associated driveways shall be paved with a durable surface, including, but not limited to, hot asphalt, bituminous or concrete.



The City of Lake Elmo has been working with Washington County and their environmental specialist to incorporate recycling efforts in our downtown area and at the new City Center. A grant provided by Washington County offered the city an opportunity to place bins throughout downtown, Lions Park and VFW Field, and at City Hall. These bins will help promote recycling throughout the area and can help reduce waste up to 60% in common areas.

## A few words Carbon Monoxide

### Carbon Monoxide:

- is a deadly gas created by incomplete combustion and is found in vehicle exhaust.
- Has no color, odor, or taste which makes it impossible to recognize without detection equipment.
- Is often found in homes with faulty gas fired appliances.



### We recommend that:

- You never run a vehicle inside a garage, even with the garage door open.
- Have Carbon Monoxide detectors on every level of your home, within ten feet of sleeping areas.
- You purchase a stand alone Carbon Monoxide / Combustible Gas detector that plugs into the wall, has a digital display, and battery backup for installation in mechanical rooms.

Carbon Monoxide poisoning is dangerous. Symptoms include:

- Weakness.
- Drowsiness.
- Headaches.
- Confusion.
- Shortness of Breath.

If you experience these symptoms or your Carbon Monoxide alarm sounds, call 911 immediately.



Washington  
County

## County Highway 15 (Manning Avenue) Phase 3 Improvement Project

### Online Engagement Information

If you are unable to attend the in-person open house on February 13, an online engagement will also be available on the project website with all of the information provided at the in-person open house. Visit the project website anytime between February 13 - March 5 to view the online engagement and provide your feedback.

<https://www.co.washington.mn.us/ManningAvePhase3>

There will be no formal presentation or discussion during the online engagement. The project manager, Eden Rogers, is available to answer any questions concerning the project at 651-430-4352 or [eden.rogers@co.washington.mn.us](mailto:eden.rogers@co.washington.mn.us).

More information on this project can also be found on the project website: [www.co.washington.mn.us/ManningAvePhase3](http://www.co.washington.mn.us/ManningAvePhase3).



### Parks Master Plan Survey

Lake Elmo Residents are invited to participate in a survey to help the City gather information for creation of a master parks plan. Please take a few minutes to share your feedback with us! The QR code to the left will take you directly to the survey, or you can also access the survey here: [Parks Master Plan Survey](#)





## Washington County will remove ash trees from Lake Elmo Park Reserve

Washington County is continuing ash tree removal within Lake Elmo Park Reserve in response to the emerald ash borer. Starting Nov. 15 through March 31, 2024, ash trees will be removed near trails and in natural areas of the park. These removals will help minimize risk to the public from falling trees and will also reduce fuel loads that can increase fire risk within the park.

### *Emerald Ash Borer*

To complete the work, a contractor will be using equipment to cut and haul the trees to staging areas, before chipping and removing debris from the site. Once work commences, ski trails on the south side of Lake Elmo and the snowmobile trail will be closed. Only ash trees will be removed, and new bareroot trees will be planted in suitable areas in the spring of 2024.

**See the county website at** to view a map of ash trees. Green dots are trees to be removed, and purple dots are ash trees surveyed in summer of 2023. If time and weather conditions allow, staff will also remove dead or dying ash trees along the property boundaries.

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture website has more information about the emerald ash borer at [www.mda.state.mn.us/eab](http://www.mda.state.mn.us/eab)

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The Sally Manzara Interpretive Nature Center is open every day  
Visit <https://sminc-lake-elmo.org/> for details.



The Sally Manzara Interpretive Nature Center in Lake Elmo's Sunfish Lake Park is operated by a non-profit organization for the benefit of the entire community. We offer programs and events for people of all ages and have "adopted" the Park in the City's program. This work is all funded by donations. Thank you for your support!

Here are some things happening at the SMINC:

- We had a really successful bird count at at the SMINC last weekend. As part of the Great Backyard Bird Count, an annual event sponsored by the Cornell Ornithology Lab, The Audubon Society and Birds of Canada, the center served as one of only a handful of public bird count locations in the area. Birders all over the globe dedicated time over the weekend to counting the birds they see and hear, and then submitting those numbers to the Bird Count's website, where that information is collected, mapped, and used to get a sense of bird populations, health and migration patterns.

We had folks of all ages come from St. Louis Park, Minneapolis, and of course the East Metro, to help count, and the bird surveys we collected will help in studying what is happening to bird species across the globe. Here at the center, we saw plenty of woodpeckers (hairy and downy), nuthatches, chickadees, sparrows and at least one eagle. If you missed it, not to worry. This event happens every February, and we will surely be counting birds again next year. In the meantime, keep an eye out for more events as we add them to the schedule, birding and otherwise!



- Our summer camp offerings are open! We have lots to pick from this year. We're offering our camps in three categories: Little Explorers, for campers aged 0 to 5, and a family member, which meets select Monday mornings from 9:30 to 11. Wonder Wednesdays are for campers aged 5 to 10, and meet from 9 to 2. Our four-day (Mon-Thurs) camps, Sunfish Explorers, meet from 9 to noon. Each camp is set up around a specific nature-related topic, depending on which you choose. For a full list of dates, and topics for each camp, check our website!



Get your kids outdoors exploring nature this summer!

## 2024 Camp Schedule

### Sunfish Explorers

Monday - Thursday from 9am-12 noon  
Our weeklong camps will encourage and educate the youth of tomorrow about the beauty and importance of a healthy outdoors. Activities include hikes, crafts, games and of course a little education about the outdoors!

- Outdoor Adventures - June 17-20
- Bees & Butterflies – July 8-11
- Birds! - July 22-25
- Bugs! – August 5-8
- **Nature's Kaleidoscope**– August 19-22

### Wonder Wednesdays

Wednesdays from 9am-2pm  
Our one-day, fun-filled, Wonder Wednesday's let kids explore the beautiful outdoor setting and learn about their surrounding environment. It is run by experienced instructors and the days include interpretive education, games, crafts to bring home, free play and hikes.

- Earth Elements – June 26
- Nature Appreciation – July 17
- Prairie Explorers – August 14

### Little Explorers

Mondays from 9:30am-11:00am (Newborns to 5-year-olds)  
Little Explorer sessions are set up for families to come together and give the little ones their first experiences exploring nature. The first hour will be a structured activity based on the day's theme. The last 30 minutes we encourage open play, to give families an opportunity to explore on their own. Adults must stay with their children at all times.

- Camp Out – June 10
- Flower Power – June 24
- Into the Woods – July 1
- Pollinators – July 15
- Bird Mania – July 29
- Bugs! – August 12



Sally Manzara Interpretive Nature Center is operated by Friends of Lake Elmo's Sunfish Lake Park, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit.

**651-408-2838 | e-mail: [info@smlnc-lake-elmo.org](mailto:info@smlnc-lake-elmo.org) | [smlnc-lake-elmo.org](http://smlnc-lake-elmo.org)**

## Request for Proposal

### Agricultural Farming Lease For Growing Season 2024

The City of Lake Elmo is accepting proposals from qualified individuals for lease of approximately 180.26 acres of city owned land for the purposes of agricultural farming during the 2024 growing season. The land is located near the City's Public Works facility at 3445 Ideal Avenue North and identified as PID # 16.029.21.24.0002 and 16.029.21.23.0003.

Respondents agree to provide the City with a Certificate of Insurance with no less than \$1,500,000 of liability coverage at the time of execution of the lease. Bids will be due no later than February 28, 2024 at 4:00 p.m. and must be

Washington County is a registered



**NALOXONE  
ACCESS  
POINT**



**Free naloxone kits and fentanyl test strips may be found at the  
Public Health & Environment offices in:**

- Cottage Grove Service Center, 13000 Ravine Parkway, Cottage Grove.
- Forest Lake Service Center, 19955 Forest Road N., Forest Lake.
- Government Center, 14949 N. 62nd St., Stillwater.



Find more information on the program  
on the county's website at  
[www.co.washington.mn.us/NAP](http://www.co.washington.mn.us/NAP)

**Washington  
County**

The City of Lake Elmo has begun participation in the State of Minnesota's Performance Measurement Program. This program began in 2010 for cities and counties to report on at least 10 performance measures annually as a way to aid residents, taxpayers, and state and local elected officials in determining the efficacy of counties and cities in providing services and measure residents' opinions of those services.

Click  
here to  
access  
reporting  
results



The Valley Branch Watershed District (VBWD) is a public organization tasked with protecting and managing local water resources within an area spanning 14 cities and townships in Washington and Ramsey Counties. The VBWD is seeking input from you as it begins updating its Watershed Management Plan which will guide VBWD actions for the next 10 years. Please take a brief (5-10 minute) survey to help the VBWD better understand your concerns and priorities regarding our local water resources.

Link to survey: [Survey](#)

City of Lake Elmo | 3880 Laverne Avenue North, Lake Elmo, MN 55042

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