

Spring 2014

THE CITY OF
LAKE ELMO

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THE SOURCE

Your source for City news and information

Metropolitan Council to Terminate Memorandum of Understanding

City Now Controls Own Growth Plans

After more than a decade of dispute with the City of Lake Elmo, the Metropolitan Council has agreed to terminate an order that mandated the community triple its size by 2030. The termination is a result of the Lake Elmo adopting a comprehensive plan and the installation of sewer lines in both the I-94 corridor and the Old Village. The order, known as the MOU, was made after a protracted fight with the regional planning council that resulted in a 2005 state Supreme Court decision against the City.

"This is a great relief to our community. It allows the City to control its own destiny and preserve the open space character that balances an urban-rural mix of development. It also eliminates the potential for a \$1.5 million dollar wastewater inefficiency fine the City would have received if we had not addressed the MOU," said Mayor Mike Pearson, who made the elimination of the MOU one of his top priorities when he took office in 2013.

The terms for termination of the agreement came after months of discussion with Met Council officials and the City on new development, the installation of utilities, and transportation issues affecting growth. When the City constructed sewer lines last summer, the door was opened to remove the contractual obligation to grow.

"Our Met Council Representative Harry Melander was very helpful in bringing both sides together to talk the issues out and set the stage for an agreement," said Mayor Pearson.

After an August meeting with the Met Council technical staff, work began on assembling the data needed to finish



the Comprehensive Plan and submit new growth numbers that represent a more reasonable pace of growth. The Met Council was shown plans for three new developments in the I-94 corridor and two in the Old Village that allowed the City to get a better handle on just how much growth could occur.

"Our analysis shows that, at most, we can grow up to 18,000-19,000 residents due to the availability of land, wetlands, utility easements and other land uses," said Council Member Anne Smith, who has served three terms under the shadow of the Met Council MOU.

In early January a delegation led by City Planning Director Kyle Klatt visited with the Met Council technical staff to discuss next steps and were presented with the terms of termination of the MOU. The terms were simple – prove to the Met Council that the City had paid for its two 2013 sewer projects and the MOU would be eliminated. On January 14th the City received a letter stating the same.

"The Lake Elmo staff has been good to work with, very collaborative. They wanted to sit at the table and talk solutions," said Met Council Community Development Director Guy Peterson.

The City is now gathering all invoices paid for the installation of sewer and will submit the records to the Met Council in early April. In the meantime City staff is working with Met Council planners to reduce the number of residents it must grow to by 2040 to approximately 19,000 residents, or 5,000 less than originally mandated by the MOU for 2030.

"The elimination of the MOU really allows us to be very strategic about our growth. We can be a little more choosy on what development we want. We can take advantage of the current economy and build a vibrant downtown that creates a sense of place for our community. We can maintain that breath of fresh air in the shadow of the Twin Cities that we have all come to know and love," concluded Pearson.



Harry Melander,
Met Council
Representative for the
City of Lake Elmo

The Mayor's Corner



Hello Neighbors!

News that bears repeating is the fact that the Metropolitan Council will soon remove its growth mandate (and its associated threat of fines) from the City of Lake Elmo. This positive change was brought about by a true team effort consisting of our work groups, the Planning Commission, City Council and City staff. I'd like to congratulate Lake Elmo, and offer much thanks to the residents who were involved and did the heavy lifting to "get us out from under."

Speaking of gratitude and heavy lifting, I offer another "thank you and job well done" to our hard working public works crews. Between last summer's storms and this winter's abundant snowfall, they have really been put to the test and have fared very well against the challenge. Nice work gentlemen.

Another highlight worth mentioning is that the City was recently recognized by the International City/County

Management Association (ICMA) for transparency and information dissemination to taxpayers. Several issues of the City's newsletter "The Source" were added to the organization's "knowledge network" as model publications for informing residents and engaging the community.

Finally, as most of you know we are seeking a state bonding request in an effort to provide clean drinking water to areas of our city that need it. If our request is successful, these monies will do much to provide both water and a vastly improved water infrastructure situation. Please consider contacting our local legislators to let them know how important you feel this is for Lake Elmo and ask that they support this reasonable bonding request. They can be reached at rep.kathy.lohmer@house.mn and sen.karin.housley@senate.mn.

As always, if you have questions about these matters or any other contact me at mpearson@lakeelmo.org.

Mayor Mike Pearson

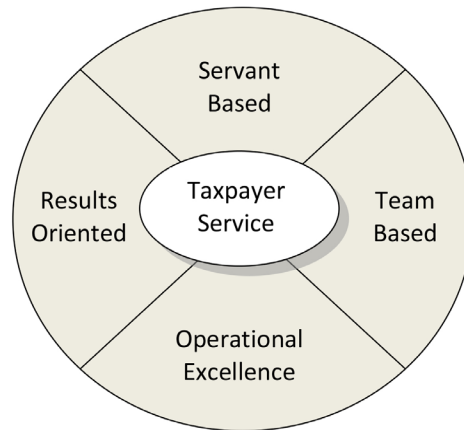
Focus on Good Government Leads to a Theory of Success

By Dean Zuleger, City Administrator

In an effort to bolster the governing principles of the City Council, the employees of the City of Lake Elmo have developed a set of core success values that fall under four headings: Servant-Based, Team-Based, Operational Excellence, and Results Oriented. The goal of each of these core values is to provide the best service to our taxpayers at the most efficient level possible – getting the most out of your tax dollar.

First, and foremost, we want to serve our taxpayers with humility. Gone are the days where judgment is passed at City Hall. We want to understand your concerns, be appropriately responsive to community needs, and commit to going the extra mile until the job is done.

Second, we want to be team-based and used the collective talent of the current staff to our advantage. This begins by checking our egos at the door, establishing a clear collective



The City of Lake Elmo has developed a set of core success values to ensure high-quality taxpayer service.

vision, and serving each team member to make them as effective in serving you as possible. Collaboration is now a watchword as we work with the community.

Third, we want to be excellent and continually improve each day. We recognize that we have a long way to go in this area but are committed to adopting best practices especially in the area of front door service

– streets, parks, clean water, and public safety. We will use the three word mantra of quality, budget and schedule as our guide.

Finally, we are going to get things done by looking forward. Our staff is committed to providing the best win-win solutions for Lake Elmo that build community. We will measure our performance to make sure we keep our word and we will put the old arguments of the past in our rear view mirror and move ahead.

These aren't just my words – but the consensus of a thoughtful staff that comes to work each day with one goal in mind – making Lake Elmo a better place to live. But we are only going to be as good those we are accountable to – the taxpayers. So if we fall down on any of these four principles, let us know. Then pick us up, dust us off and know that we will learn from these mistakes and make Lake Elmo a better place for the effort.

Development Update in the Village and I-94 Corridor

As spring is on the horizon in Lake Elmo, the City is currently experiencing an increased level of interest related to residential development. The extension of sanitary sewer throughout Stage I of the I-94 Corridor Planning Area and to the Village Planning Area has triggered a high level of activity in preparing plans and plats for new single family neighborhoods in Lake Elmo. The City has received nine proposals for new single family neighborhoods, eight of which are located in the areas planned for sanitary sewer service as guided by the Comprehensive Plan. All of these applications are at different stages of approval.

The most advanced of these applications is the Savona neighborhood, proposed by Lennar Homes. The Savona development received conditional Final Plat approval on February 18, 2014 for the first phase of single family residential development, including 44 single family lots. The development is located immediately west of Keats Avenue North (CSAH 19) in the I-94 Corridor Planning Area. In addition to the Savona project, the City has reviewed and/or approved six other Concept or Sketch Plans, including the following proposed developments:

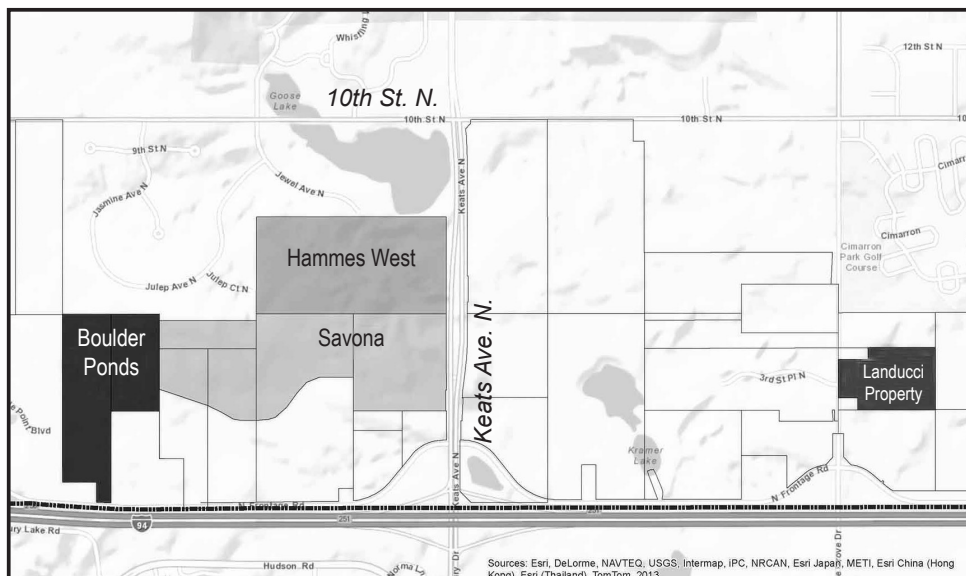
I-94 Corridor Planning Area

- Boulder Ponds of Lake Elmo
- Hammes West
- Landucci Property

Village Planning Area

- Easton Village
- Schiltgen Farms – Parcel B
- Wildflower at Lake Elmo

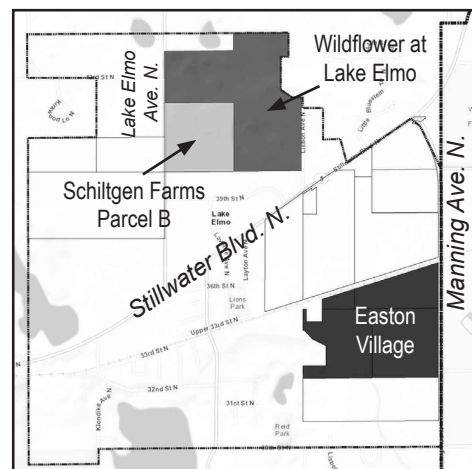
The Concept or Sketch Plan represents the first stage of development review. As these development proposals are received, the City reviews them for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan and the City's zoning and subdivision ordinances, which are the guiding plans and regulations the City uses to review all development



The City of Lake Elmo has received nine proposals for new single family developments. Three join Savona in the I-94 Corridor (above) and three are located in the Village Planning Area (at right).

proposals. Both the Comprehensive Plan and City Code have been updated within the past year to support new sewer development. It is anticipated that the proposed developments listed above will be proceeding through the development review process, with Preliminary Plat being the next phase of review. As part of the review of a Preliminary Plat, a public hearing is held by the Planning Commission for every proposed development.

In addition to reviewing recently submitted development plans for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan and various ordinances, the City is also integrating development review into other ongoing planning efforts in the community, the most critical of which relate to transportation. The City is working with MnDOT and Washington County on several transportation projects that will have long-term implications on existing and newly developing areas of Lake Elmo. Key transportation projects currently include the installation of traffic signals at both intersections of Lake Elmo Avenue (CSAH 17) and Trunk Highway 5 (TH 5), the Manning Avenue (CSAH 15) Corridor Project (from I-94 to TH



5) and the Lake Elmo Avenue (CSAH 17) Corridor Project (from 30th Street to TH 5). In addition, many of the new developments will be accessed from County arterial roadways. As development proposals are received, the plans are reviewed by the County to ensure that the proposed access locations will work safely and efficiently. Finally, the City is evaluating both existing and proposed park and trail facilities adjacent to new developments. The Park Commission has identified improved trail connectivity as a high priority, especially in newly developing areas. As development comes forward, the City will work to improve trail facilities and connections per the Park Commission's goals and priorities.

If anyone has any questions, feel free to contact the Planning Department at City Hall.

City Working with with Stillwater School District on Joint Community Park



The City of Lake Elmo will acquire 5 acres of public park space through a Joint Powers Agreement with ISD 834.

In March the Stillwater School District proposed a partnership between the city and the district concerning a park expansion at Oak-Land Junior High School. The district presented a plan to the park commission including the complete reconstruction of the three existing tennis courts on campus at an estimated cost of \$310,000, which the district will pay for with alternate facility funds.

The district requested that the park commission pitch in an additional \$80,000 of parkland dedication fees, which would cover the cost of doubling the space with the construction of three new courts. The school tennis courts are currently open to the public and heavily used in summer, according to Dennis Bloom, Director of Operations for Stillwater Public Schools. In exchange for the contribution of funds, the district would allocate five acres of the 40 acre parcel to be used as community park space.

This isn't the first time that the city and the school district have worked together. Just recently the two entities collaborated on improving the student drop off point at Lake Elmo Elementary School.

"It's refreshing to maintain a positive working relationship with the City of Lake Elmo," said Bloom. "This project is a win for the school, the city, and the community."

The district will accept bids on the project this spring, and begin construction this summer. The City is required to submit a park sketch plan to the district by September 2014.

Tune In to "The Mayor Show"

New Show Hosted by Mayor Pearson to air on Channel 16 and Online

Get the inside scoop on what's happening in Lake Elmo!

"The Mayor Show," hosted by Lake Elmo Mayor Mike Pearson, will provide an in depth look at a variety of different topics including city services, development, policy, businesses, recreation, and more.



In the screenshot above, Mayor Mike Pearson interviews Lake Elmo Fire Chief Greg Malmquist, on the inaugural episode of "The Mayor Show."

The first episode features the Lake Elmo Fire Department. Learn about the department's role in the community, find out what it takes to serve on your city fire department, and get a glimpse at some of the hands-on training exercises that these local heroes take part in.

New episodes of "The Mayor Show" will be available each month. The show airs on Channel 16 at 9 am and 5 pm on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. You can also catch new episodes by subscribing to the City of Lake Elmo's YouTube Channel.

City Allows Chickens and Bees

Lake Elmo residents can now keep chickens and bees on smaller residential lots with a City permit, due to revisions made the City's livestock ordinance on February 18, 2014.



The previous ordinance restricted livestock, other than horses, to properties 10 acres or larger.

Permits for chickens and bees are \$25 each. Chickens can be kept on lots as small as half an acre. The number allowed begins at four chickens and increases by two for every half acre.

Bees can be kept on lots three-quarters of an acre in size or larger. The number of bee colonies allowed begins with four colonies on a 3/4 acre lot and increases to six colonies at 2.5 acres.

Please contact City Hall to inquire about the permit application process or for more information on the ordinance.

Burn Safely this Spring

Recreational fires are a sure sign that spring is here. Recreational fires, defined as contained to a 3'x3' area, do not require a permit and are allowed when the following provisions are followed. Fires larger than 3'x3' require a fire permit, which can be acquired at City Hall.



Recreational fires are allowed under the following provisions:

- The fire is contained to a 3X3 foot area; this can be an in-ground, on ground or in a free standing pre-manufactured fireplace.
- Fire must be for recreational purposes only, not for land clearing or yard clean-up.
- Ground must be clear of all vegetation down to mineral soil 5 feet out around entire perimeter of fire ring.
- Only clean burning wood or vegetative fuels can be used. No burning of trash, leaves or anything that would create a black smoke (treated lumber, tar paper, etc.)
- The fire should be at least 25 feet from any structure or combustible material. The smoke should not be a nuisance to the neighbors.
- Fire extinguishing equipment (extinguisher, garden hose, shovel, sand) is readily available.

When starting or tending a fire, regardless of the size, consider the conditions. Is it too windy to burn? Is it too dry to burn? Fires must be attended at all times and extinguished at the end of the day. Smoldering fires and leaf pile fires are illegal. Watch for possible burning restrictions or a burning ban implemented by DNR in the event of a dry spring. Check the DNR site before burning, www.dnr.state.mn.us/forestry/fire/firerating_restrictions.html

**JANUARY, FEBRUARY
EMERGENCY CALL RESPONSE
Fire: 20, Rescue: 10, Medical: 27**

Working Toward an Energy Efficient Community

You may have noticed a trend toward environmentally friendly and energy saving products. These products not only save energy, but can also help you save money. The City of Lake Elmo wants to encourage you to go green as well.

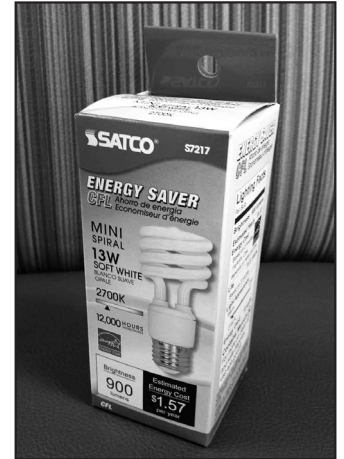
The City has recently acquired 500 Compact Fluorescent Light Bulbs (CFLs), which were funded through a Washington County recycling grant. These light bulbs will be provided to residents at no cost to help them become more energy efficient.

Compared to incandescent light bulbs, ENERGY STAR qualified CFLs:

- Use about one-quarter of the energy to produce the same amount of light,
- Last about 10 times longer,
- Produce about 75 percent less heat, which reduces cooling costs,
- Saves about \$30 or more in electricity costs over the lifetime of the bulb,
- Meet strict energy efficiency and performance requirements

According to ENERGY STAR, "If every American home replaced just one light bulb with a light bulb that's earned the ENERGY STAR, we would save enough energy to light 3 million homes for a year, save about \$600 million in annual energy costs, and prevent 9 billion pounds of greenhouse gas emissions per year, equivalent to those from about 800,000 cars."

Stop in to City Hall between 8 am and 4:30 pm while supplies last and pick up a complimentary Compact Fluorescent Light Bulb. Limit two per household please.



Stop by City Hall to collect your free energy saving light bulb.

Framed Fabric and Temporary Structures Not Allowed



Although they are an easy fix to everyday storage and vehicle shelter, framed fabric shelters are not allowed in the City of Lake Elmo. Such shelters do not meet the minimum State Building Code requirements or the City's current zoning code, and therefore are not recognized as legal structures in the City of Lake Elmo. Please contact the City's Building Department with any questions, or for additional information.

Lake Elmo Nonprofit Benefits Those with Heart Disorders

Gracia Lorraine Hunt was born on August 2, 2012 with a severe Congenital Heart Defect called Hypoplastic Left Heart Syndrome. Gracia (also known as Gracie) lived 82 wonderful days, and will forever be loved and remembered.

Cakes From Grace Inc., a nonprofit organization, was founded by Lake Elmo resident Becky Hunt in her daughter's memory. Through it Hunt hopes to share her story, raise awareness about Congenital Heart Defects, reach out to those that have been affected by them, and to give hope for those who have lost a child. This special organization provides custom cakes for kids with Congenital Heart Defects, and donates specialty cupcakes to fundraisers raising awareness about Congenital Heart Defects.

"We understand that the simple things like a cake are luxuries to a heart family and are pretty special to kids that have undergone so much in their short lives battling a heart defect," said Hunt. "We design and customize each cake to reflect the personality of each child receiving a cake."

Within one year of launching the organization Hunt baked and donated



Cakes From Grace founder Becky Hunt displays cupcakes that she donated to raise funds and awareness for congenital heart disorders. Hunt founded the organization in her daughter's memory.

cakes and cupcakes to benefit hundreds of families. After taking a break from baking in early 2014 to welcome baby girl Emilia Grace to the world, Hunt is eager to get back into the kitchen and continue reaching out to others, and keeping Gracie's memory alive.

Partnership with Gartner Studios

Stillwater-based Gartner Studios reached out to Cakes From Grace to help the organization create awareness and support their ongoing work. This partnership includes product donations from Gartner's Duff Goldman by Gartner Studios and Tylinia

Foods product lines, and using their extensive business network for outreach efforts. Future plans also include creating a showcase event benefiting the organization that ties in Food Network "Ace of Cakes" star/food celebrity Duff Goldman and some of the Midwest's top cake and pastry chefs.

According to Gartner Studios CEO Greg Gartner, "We're very impressed with this outstanding organization and their mission, which touches families who have suffered this heartbreak. We're proud to be a part of celebrating Gracie's legacy, and look forward to supporting Cakes From Grace as they expand their outreach."

What's next?

Cakes From Grace will be providing cupcakes at the 5th Annual Hope in Grace fundraiser. All proceeds will be donated to the organization to support pediatric cardiology research at the University of Minnesota. Cakes From Grace is also currently in the process of claiming 501(c)3 status.

For more information visit www.cakesfromgrace.com or www.gartnerstudios.com.

Lake Elmo Public Library: Ebooks and Summer Reading

E-books have arrived at your community library! As other metro libraries have restricted access to electronic materials, the Lake Elmo Public Library has rolled out two new e-book services: *Freanding* and *Overdrive*, as well as *Tumblebooks* for children. *Tumblebooks* is accessible through the library website and no login or password is required. *Freanding* and *Overdrive* require a Lake Elmo Public Library card number to download or stream an ebook. Library cards are free of charge.

Both reading services work on most tablets. *Overdrive* works on all Kindle devices, whereas *Freanding* only works on the Kindle Fire tablet. Applications

for both services are available on the library's website to help streamline the downloading process. How-to videos are also available on both the library and the *Overdrive* site.

Summer is fast approaching, and with it, the end of the school year. Another fun-filled Summer Reading Program is planned at the library for children and youth through junior high age. This year's theme is 'Read S'more Books!' Watch for details about the kick-off medallion hunt on June 9th and other special activities through August 15th.

The library is open 42 hours per week: Mondays and Wednesdays 10 am to 5 pm, Tuesdays and Thursdays 10 am to

8 pm, Fridays and Saturdays 10 am to 2 pm. For more information visit <http://lakeelmopubliclibrary.org> or call 651-773-4926.



The Lake Elmo Public Library will be hosting their summer reading program again this year. This year's theme is 'Read S'more Books!,' and the program kicks off on June 9, 2014.

Community Engagement Survey

How connected do you feel in your community? In your opinion, what is the City of Lake Elmo lacking? Initiated by the City's NextGen committee, the City of Lake Elmo is seeking feedback from residents regarding their engagement in the community, and needs and desires for the future. Please consider taking a moment to answer a few short questions. **Completed surveys can be mailed to Lake Elmo City Hall, Community Survey, 3800 Laverne Ave. N., Lake Elmo, MN 55042**, or dropped off at City Hall. The survey is also available to take online at www.lakeelmo.org/survey. Those who complete and return the survey prior to April 30, 2014 will be eligible to win a gift package from establish salon in downtown Lake Elmo (please include name and contact information to qualify).

1. How many years have you lived in Lake Elmo?
- Less than 2 years 2 to 5 years
 6 to 10 years 11 to 20 years
 more than 20 years

2. Which neighborhood do you live in?

3. How many children 17 or under live in your household?

4. In which category is your age?
- 18-25 26-35 36-50 51-65 65+

5. How likely are you to remain in Lake Elmo for the next five years?
- Very likely Somewhat likely
 Somewhat unlikely Very unlikely

6. Would you say that you feel a strong sense of community, weak sense, or no sense of community at all?
- Strong Sense Weak Sense No Sense

7. About how often, if at all, do you talk to or visit with your immediate neighbors?
- Just about every day Several times a week
 Several times a month Less than several times a month

8. In the past 12 months, about how many times, if at all, have you or another household member visited downtown Lake Elmo for shopping, dining, or entertainment?
- Never/0 times 1-2 times 3-4 times
 5-6 times 7 or more times

9. In the last 12 months, how many times have you or other household members participated in the following activities in Lake Elmo?

- Used the Lake Elmo Public Library or its services
 Never 1-2 times 3-5 times 6-9 times 10+
- Participated in a recreation program or activity
 Never 1-2 times 3-5 times 6-9 times 10+
- Visited a neighborhood park or City park
 Never 1-2 times 3-5 times 6-9 times 10+

- Attended a meeting of local elected officials or other public meeting

- Never 1-2 times 3-5 times 6-9 times 10+

- Read a Lake Elmo newsletter

- Never 1-2 times 3-5 times 6-9 times 10+

- Volunteered time to a group or activity in Lake Elmo

- Never 1-2 times 3-5 times 6-9 times 10+

10. Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the City's efforts to communicate with residents through publications, public notices, its website and other means?

- Very satisfied Somewhat satisfied
 Somewhat dissatisfied Very dissatisfied

11. Please rate each of the following aspects of quality of life in Lake Elmo: Excellent, Good, or Poor

- Lake Elmo as a place to live

- Excellent Good Poor

- Your neighborhood as a place to live

- Excellent Good Poor

- Lake Elmo as a place to raise children

- Excellent Good Poor

- Lake Elmo as a place to work

- Excellent Good Poor

- Lake Elmo as a place to retire

- Excellent Good Poor

- The overall quality of life in Lake Elmo

- Excellent Good Poor

12. What types of new business or commercial development, including shops and services, would you most like to see in Lake Elmo? Check all that apply:

- Retail shops Coffee shops
- Grocery stores Youth programs/child care
- Small businesses Farmers market
- Nothing - Lake Elmo is fine as it is
- Other (Please Specify) _____

Name _____ Address _____
 Phone _____ Email _____



3800 Laverne Ave. N.
Lake Elmo, MN 55042

PRSTD STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 19
LAKE ELMO, MN

POSTAL PATRON LAKE ELMO MN 55042

Lake Elmo Parks are Getting a Make-Over

Lake Elmo City Parks are going to look a little brighter this summer. That's thanks to the new park signage that the Park Commission plans to have installed by mid-summer.

The need for new park signage was first identified in a community-wide park survey that was issued last June. Results indicated that a high percentage of residents were unaware of where parks were located in the city. An audit of community parks conducted by the park commission in November 2013 further emphasized the need to replace the rundown and unidentifiable signage.

The proposed park signs were designed incorporating elements from a Branding and Theming study, which was launched in November 2012, and led by Damon Farber and Associates, a locally renowned landscape architecture firm. The five-month study involving visual listening exercises, community studies, and group discussions, resulted in a kit of design elements that reflect Lake Elmo's unique character. These elements, including lighting, signage, fencing, and landscaping, are intended to provide direction for new and existing developments that will contribute to giving Lake Elmo a feel and look that's different than that of surrounding communities. The signs will be the first large-scale initiative to implement the theming.

"We are excited to kick off the theming exercises with the

park signs," said Shane Weis, commission chair. "We're hoping that the fresh look and pop of color will attract and encourage residents to utilize their neighborhood parks."

Costs for the new signs will be paid in whole by parkland dedication fees. The Park Commission currently has a pool of roughly \$900,000 in parkland funds collected from development. The commission met for a special planning session in November 2013 to determine a list of priorities in which they would utilize the funds. In addition to the signs, other priorities include restoring park equipment, the addition of select amenities, and developing a regional trail network.



Design of the proposed city park signage, pictured above, incorporates elements from the City's branding and theming study. New signs will be installed at parks this summer.

THE SOURCE


A publication of the City of Lake Elmo
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