



STAFF REPORT

DATE: 4/2/2024

REGULAR

TO: Lake Elmo City Council

FROM: Clark Schroeder

AGENDA ITEM: Changing to a .gov domain

REVIEWED BY: Clark Schroeder interim city administrator.

BACKGROUND:

The city of Lake Elmo has had a web address of lakeelmo.org for many years. The cybersecurity and infrastructure security agency (CISA) [Home Page | CISA](#) oversees the top-level domain for the nation, which is the .GOV domain. Using a .gov domain increases the trust in government communication and are authenticated to improve collective cybersecurity concerns. When people see the .gov domain, people understand they are dealing with an official U.S. based government organization. Having a .gov domain also provides security benefits, two factor authentication on the .gov registrar. A .gov helps the public identify official, trusted information. The .Gov is only available to US based government organizations. They are available to all levels of government including cities, towns, townships, counties, election offices, tribal governments, courts and others. I registered the domain lakeelmo.gov this winter and was notified that we can use that domain recently.

ISSUE BEFORE COUNCIL: Council is being asked to make a long-term move to the .gov domain.

PROPOSAL DETAILS/ANALYSIS:

Once the council decides to move to the .gov domain, Metro-Inet, will get the DNS setup and coordinate a time to flip the email and website over. They would coordinate with our web hosting provider. We would keep the old URL and old emails. There would be no disruption to any existing access. Lakeelmo.org and lakeelmo .Gov would each point to the same website and flow to the same email inboxes. Out going email would come from the .gov address. Down the road when everything is updated you could look at officially sunsetting the org addresses. This could take a year or two. Metro-Inet has done this for North Oaks (northoaksmn.gov) and Oakdale (oakdalemn.gov) and are working with two other cities They say many other cities in their network are looking at it. Others in our area that have switched are Stillwatermn.gov, hudsonwi.gov, St. Croix County is sccwi.gov, lakevillemn.gov, Woodburymn.gov, maplewoodmn.gov, stpaul.gov, cottagetrovemn.gov, shakopeemn.gov, Inver Grove Heights is lghmn.gov, ashlandcountywi.gov. In researching whether to go with lakeelmo.gov versus lakeelmomn.gov I only found one other Lake Elmo in America and it is a park in Montana. Unique cities/counties can just go with their name.gov, more common names need to add the state to the url, or citymn.gov. The Federal government approved us to go with lakeelmo.gov due to our unique name. I suspect most government units will be .gov within the next few years.

FISCAL IMPACT: Nothing for the URL/Domain. In the short term, as people run out of business cards we will reprint with the .gov address. Maybe letter head if we have some pre-printed.

OPTIONS:

City council can decide to move to a .gov or not.

RECOMMENDATION:

Motion to add the city domain of lakeellmo.gov.