

Fall 2012

THE CITY OF  
LAKE ELMO

[www.lakeelmo.org](http://www.lakeelmo.org)

# THE SOURCE

Your source for City news and information

## City Council Makes Traffic Safety Priority Number One

The recent closing of the St. Croix Bridge and the construction of the I-694 ramp system has made Lake Elmo a popular route for motorists trying to find a convenient way to and from work each day -- a phenomenon that has caused a treacherous traffic environment.

In response to the increase in traffic and many concerns by residents, the City Council of Lake Elmo has taken two specific actions to calm traffic. On Wednesday September 5, 2012, the City Council allocated \$7500

for additional traffic enforcement and speed control. For 30 days in September and November, the Washington County Sheriff's Department has dedicated one officer from 6 a.m. to 9 a.m. and from 4 p.m. – 6 p.m. to traffic

control. Deputies have been focusing their efforts on Lake Elmo Avenue, STH 5, 30<sup>th</sup> Street, 10<sup>th</sup> Street, and Demontreville Trail. In addition, the Minnesota State Patrol has increased their efforts on STH 5. At the time of this writing more than 120 speeding citations and warnings have been issued during this concentrated effort. 26 of the citations/warnings have been issued to Lake Elmo residents.

On September 14<sup>th</sup>, the City Council adopted a four point traffic calming policy to create some long-term solutions to increased volume. The Council voted to:

1. Adopt a "zero tolerance" traffic enforcement policy for posted speed limits in Lake Elmo;
2. Encourage Washington County to reduce the speed limit on Lake Elmo Avenue to 30 MPH between 20<sup>th</sup> Street and STH 5;
3. Encourage MNDOT to reduce the speed limit on STH 5 to 45 MPH from Jamaca Avenue; to Klondike and 30 MPH from Klondike to Manning Avenue;

4. Encourage MNDOT to complete a scheduled "Road Safety Audit" on STH 5 as funds becomes available.

The Road Safety Audit is the result of concerns brought by advocates, led by former Lake Elmo Planning Commissioner Jennifer Pelletier, to create a safer traffic environment around Lake Elmo Elementary School.

*"We are working closely with MNDOT and Washington County Highway officials to best understand what we can do to create a safer traffic environment on State Highway 5. Due to the downtown nature of this stretch of road, drivers almost get lulled into a false sense of security and then wind up having to react quickly to a high rate of speed. The Road Safety Audit will help us address this issue"*

- Jennifer Pelletier

The City Council also has also budgeted an additional \$70,000 of future tax levy to be used for traffic enforcement if the current concentrated law enforcement reduces speeding on Lake Elmo streets. The funds would be used for a dedicated traffic officer to be provided by Washington County.

*"Making a left turn onto State Highway 5 from Lake Elmo Avenue is almost impossible".*



The City of Lake Elmo is using its speed trailer to gather speed data to determine if concentrated enforcement has calmed traffic. Staff will analyze the data to determine if speeds were impacted by enforcement and make a recommendation to the City Council on whether to expend the additional funds in 2013.

## Dry Summer, High Water Use Has Some Residents Seeing Red



An unseasonably dry summer had some Lake Elmo resident's green lawns turn to red ink as water bills soared into four figures based on a 2009 ordinance adopted by the Lake Elmo City Council to encourage water conservation and relieve peak water use demands.

Twenty-six residents received a water bill greater than \$1,000 and one resident used over 400,000 gallons of water in the third quarter of 2012 that can largely be attributed to the water conservation rates established in 2009.

"State Statutes and the Department of Natural Resources mandate that we adopt a water conservation rate structure, which we did in 2009. Along with this adoption, we tried our best to inform our water customers that there would be monetary consequences for heavy watering and we suggested ways to conserve via newsletters, the City website and mailers." said Finance Director Cathy Bendel.

At the instruction of the City Council, City Administrator Zuleger and Bendel will begin the process of constructing a utility rate case to determine if water rates at the high volume use level can be reduced.

"We have two years, 2007 and 2012, of data that give us a clear picture of what our operational costs are in a drought year. We will use this data to determine if we can reduce the rate by next summer. But our users need to remember that we do treat our water with chlorine, so high water volume use does compound our operational costs," said Bendel.

The City of Lake Elmo has 1,011 water utility customers that use an average of 22,000-25,000 gallons of water per quarter. In the Third Quarter of 2012, 265 customers used well over 70,000 gallons each of water creating a peak water demand almost 100% higher than recommended standards. Lake Elmo water rates at the lower use level are comparable to other surrounding communities but are higher at the high gallon use levels.

"Water continues to be our community's number one resource. We need to find a way to balance its use with our residents ability to pay," concluded Council Member Anne Smith.

## Mayor Johnston Named Chair of Met Council Open Space Panel

Lake Elmo Mayor Dean Johnston has been named Chairman of the Metropolitan Council's Park & Open Space Commission - a policy making body that focuses on parks, conservation spaces and trails in the Twin Cities. Lake Elmo is home to 17 parks and one of the largest park reserves in the Twin Cities Metropolitan area.



"The Lake Elmo mission statement emphasizes our commitment to preserving the city's open space character," so we are thrilled that the Met Council has recognized our true identity by appointing our Mayor to lead this Commission," said Dean Zuleger, City Administrator.

## City Prepares to Fine Seven Properties for Code Violations

In an effort to clean up the community, the City of Lake Elmo in cooperation with the Washington County Sheriff's Department, will begin fining certain property owners who have refused to cooperate in complying with the Municipal Code. **The City will recommend \$1,000 - \$2,000 fines plus abatement orders** for properties that have received warning letters but have not complied with requests to mitigate everything from cars, wood piles, scrap metal, and property maintenance. Property owners not responding to City requests can expect a citation within 10 days after receiving the violation notice. Beginning in December, the City will begin publishing the names of the worst 12 properties in the City in a section of the newsletter known as "The Dirty Dozen."

## Quiet Zone Study Will Address Railroad Whistles

The City of Lake Elmo will begin the process of "quieting" the City by engaging in a Quiet Zone Study at the Lake Elmo Avenue crossing. They City will also examine the 31st Street crossing to determine whether the street can be made into a cul-de-sac to eliminate the whistle and provide a safer traffic environment on Highway 5. This work is expected to be completed in 2013.



# November 6, 2012 General Election to include Lake Elmo positions of Mayor and two Council Members

Cast your ballots on Tuesday, November 6, 2012 for Mayor and two Council Members at the polls open from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the city's two precincts. Three residents have filed for the mayor seat currently held by Dean Johnston. The mayoral candidates (in alphabetical order) are Nicholas Duffy, Dean Johnston and Mike Pearson. Four residents have filed for two city council seats currently held by Brett Emmons and Anne Smith. The Council candidates (in alphabetical order) are Justin Bloyer, Brett Emmons, Greg Hall and Anne Smith. The mayor and city council seats are for four-year terms and begin January 2013. Read more about your local candidates in the Voters' Guide, which is inserted in the center of this publication.

Sample ballots are available on our website at [www.lakeelmo.org](http://www.lakeelmo.org) or at City Hall. The General Election ballot will include the presidential race, U.S. Senator, U.S. Representative (district 4), state senator (district 39), state representative (district 39B), county commissioner (district 3), soil & water supervisor (district 3), school board seats (districts 622, 832 and 834), numerous judicial races and two proposed constitutional amendments.

Polling sites have not changed with the redistricting this year and are as follows: Precinct 1 – Lake Elmo Fire Hall located at 3510 Laverne Avenue North for voters residing south of Highway 5 and Precinct 2 – Lake Elmo City

Hall located at 3800 Laverne Avenue North for voters residing north of Highway 5. Polls open at 7:00 a.m. and close at 8:00 p.m. Residents are strongly encouraged to exercise their right to vote on November 6, 2012. "We love to see the residents coming in to vote and appreciate their civic-mindedness to have their voices heard" expressed Sandie Thone, City Clerk and Local Election

Administrator. "The Secretary of State's office is predicting this election has the potential to have high voter turnouts, which is especially encouraging." Thone expressed her appreciation for the many election judges who volunteer their time to make election day run so smoothly. "These people are hard-working and committed to the voters, they all deserve a big hand for all they do for the election process."

Absentee voting for the general election continues through November 5, 2012. Voters who qualify for absentee voting may vote at Washington County or call 651.430.6175

to obtain an application by mail.

Voters who are not registered or need to update their information may do so on election day with proof of residency. To register to vote, you must be a minimum of 18 years old on election day, a U.S. citizen and a Minnesota resident at least 20 days before the election. For proof of residency requirements please visit our website at [www.lakeelmo.org](http://www.lakeelmo.org) or contact the City Clerk's office at 651-747-3900.



## At a Glance

The polling places for Lake Elmo residents are:

### Precinct 1

If you live south of Highway 5  
Lake Elmo Fire Station  
3510 Laverne Avenue North

### Precinct 2

If you live north of Highway 5  
Lake Elmo City Hall  
3800 Laverne Avenue North

Polls are open from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. For more information: Call the City Clerk's office at 651-747-3900.

## Who Can Vote?

You can vote if you are ALL of the following:

- 18 years of age or older on Election Day
- a US citizen
- a Minnesota resident for at least 20 days before the election
- a resident of your precinct on Election Day
- not under court-ordered guardianship in which the court order revokes my right to vote;
- have not been found by a court to be legally incompetent to vote;
- have the right to vote because, if I have been convicted of a felony, my felony status has expired (been completed) or I have been discharged from my sentence
- not legally incompetent

*Your right to vote is a precious freedom. We are fortunate to live in a democracy where the right to vote is a fundamental privilege. All eligible citizens have a right to have an equal say in the decisions that affect their lives. The supreme power is vested in the people and exercised by them.*

**Get out and vote on November 6, 2012!**

# Lake Elmo Public Library is now open!



A view of the children's room in the new Lake Elmo Public Library, located at 3537 Lake Elmo Blvd. Children's story time is held on the first and third Friday of each month.

The new Lake Elmo Public Library opened officially on September 7, 2012. Along with a large selection of books, a computer lab and reading room, free Wi-fi is also available as well as a complimentary coffee service during open hours, donated by the Friends of the Lake Elmo Public Library.

The library collection is growing steadily. As of mid-September, there were more than 3,600 books in the collection, with new donations and items to catalog coming in daily.

Donations are still being accepted and can be dropped off at the library building during open hours, or at City Hall. There are specific needs for children's and teen books, espe-

cially non-fiction in those two areas. We are also looking for DVDs and audio books on CD. Current and popular bestsellers are always appreciated.

We have a story time on the 1st and 3rd Fridays of each month at 10:30 am. Pre-school age children and families are welcome to attend.

The library will be hosting a few upcoming events in October, check the library website at [lakeelmopubliclibrary.org](http://lakeelmopubliclibrary.org) for more information.

The library is always looking for eager volunteers. If interested, please stop by the library or city hall to pick up an application.



## *What you need to know*

### **Library Hours:**

Monday through Saturday 10am to 1pm  
Tuesday and Thursday 5pm to 8pm

### **Library Address:**

3537 Lake Elmo Blvd.

### **Book Donations:**

Book contributions are welcomed and can be dropped off at the library or City Hall during business hours.



The Lake Elmo Library offers many resources including the growing selection of young adult fiction, pictured above.

## *We Want to Connect with You*



The City is constantly looking for new ways to connect with you! Follow us on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/LakeElmoMN> or stay up-to-date with our weekly e-newsletter, 'fresh,' found at [www.lakeelmo.org](http://www.lakeelmo.org).



## Familiarize Yourself with the CodeRED Emergency Notification System



Please take the time to ensure you will receive notifications about emergency situations that may impact YOU!

The City of Lake Elmo utilizes the CodeRED Emergency Notification System - an ultra high-speed notification system designed to quickly notify the public of emergencies that may affect their health, safety or welfare. The system sends recorded messages to targeted areas within the County at the rate of up to 60,000 calls per hour. It delivers a recorded message from the City Administrator's office describing the situation and any instructions for immediate or future action. The message will play when answered by a live person or an answering machine and makes 3 attempts to connect to each number. If you opt-in for text message and/or email alerts those will also be sent. The Calling number for general emergencies will display 866-419-5000. In weather related emergencies the calling number will display 800-566-9780. To hear the last message delivered, simply dial the number back.

Examples of times when the CodeRED system could be utilized: Extended utility outages, evacuation notice and route, missing person, fires, floods, bomb threat, hostage situation, chemical spill or gas leak, and other incidents where rapid and accurate notification are essential for life safety.

The system uses the 9-1-1 data base and other sources for its notification lists, but no one should assume that their information is included. Registering is easy and takes less than five minutes. To do so, visit the 'emergency services' link at [www.lakeelmo.org](http://www.lakeelmo.org) and click on the CodeRED logo, which will route you to a registration page where you can add or change a phone number, including cell phones, or opt for a text message and/or email alerts. You can opt out of alerts at any time. Your contact information remains private and will only be used for critical communications.

For more information on the CodeRED notification system visit [www.lakeelmo.org](http://www.lakeelmo.org) or contact the City at 651-747-3900.

## Fire Protection: How it Impacts Homeowners Insurance

We receive many phone calls from residents and insurance agents about their homeowners insurance regarding an increase, new company, rating, etc. We also get calls from residents outside our coverage area, which is approximately Hwy. 36 South to Hwy. 94 and Inwood Ave. East to Manning Ave. Residents outside this area to the East may have a Lake Elmo mailing address, but are actually covered by Bayport Fire Department. We also receive calls from residents that think we are their fire department because we are geographically closer than other departments, but unfortunately that is not how coverage is determined, it is by city boundaries. Some insurance companies work from the ISO rating, which for Lake Elmo is 6 for homes located within 1000' of fire hydrants and a 9 for homes in "non-hydrated" areas or greater than 1000' from a fire hydrant. ISO is based on a point system that looks at things such as station location, response times, 911 system, water system, training records, equipment on trucks, type of vehicles, mutual/auto aid with neighbors, ability to shuttle water, etc. Other insurance companies want to know how many and the type of trucks we have, how much water we carry and if we have Mutual Aid with surrounding communities.



What all this means is that the farther you live from a fire station and are not near fire hydrants, the more your homeowners insurance will be. To better serve our residents into the future, know that your Lake Elmo Fire Department is doing everything in its power to lower our ISO rating (better training, updating equipment, working with our neighbors, improving staffing, etc.) to provide better service and save our residents money. We are also working with the city in planning for the future in Lake Elmo to properly locate fire stations to improve response times as well as replacing aging vehicles to provide better fire protection. I hope this clarifies some of your questions. If you have questions or want additional information, feel free to contact station 1 at 651-770-5006.

If you have any questions or suggestions please contact Chief Malmquist at [galmquist@lakeelmo.org](mailto:galmquist@lakeelmo.org).

**JUNE, JULY, AUGUST  
EMERGENCY CALL RESPONSE  
Fire: 36, Rescue: 16, Medical: 69**

## MnDOT Open House to Cover Improvements on Highway 36

Area residents and business owners are invited to attend an open house to view details about an improvement project planned for Hwy 36 between I-694 and just east of Demontreville Trail North in Lake Elmo, Pine Springs and Grant.



Improvements include the replacement of the Hwy 36/Hilton Trail North signalized intersection with a grade-separated diamond interchange.

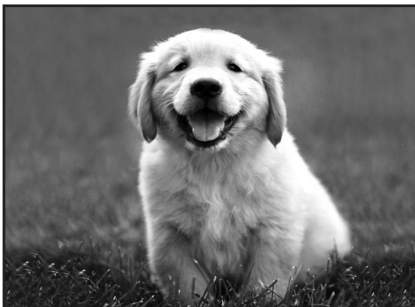
The Hwy 36/Hilton Trail improvement project will improve safety and efficiency along Hwy 36 and stabilize the shoreline on the south end of Long Lake adjacent to Hwy 36.

The open house will be held Thursday, Nov. 15 from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. at Lake Elmo City Hall—3800 Laverne Avenue North.

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## Calling Rover and Spot!

*It is time to obtain your 2013 dog license*



City Code requires that all dogs be licensed in the City of Lake Elmo. Licensing protects the community by ensuring dogs are properly vaccinated, for the safety of residents and other

pets. A dog license may also help police or animal control officers locate and identify your dog to return it home safely.

The 2013 license period of January 1 through December 31 is right around the corner. Current licenses will expire on December 31, 2012. Stop by City Hall Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Application for licenses may be made sixty (60) days prior to the start of the licensing year (November 1, 2012). Fees are \$20. Proof of rabies vaccine is required to obtain a dog license.

*Please remember whether in your yard or at our lovely parks, please be courteous and always clean up after your pets!*

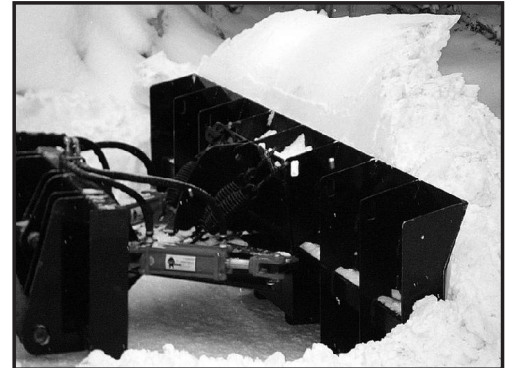
## Snow Plowing and Winter Parking Regulations

Following a 3" snowfall, no parking is allowed on city streets until after they have been plowed. Officers will issue citations and/or tow.

Lake Elmo residents are reminded that the City has a snowplowing policy which must be followed so plowing can be done as efficiently and safely as possible. Snow must not be cleared from driveways or sidewalks onto City streets. Please, keep your snow on your property. Violators will be cited.

Trash containers must be placed in driveways, not onto City streets. Trash and recycling containers placed on streets create traffic hazards and increase plowing time.

It is the policy of the City to maintain the streets in good winter driving condition by sufficient plowing and sanding. To that end, the Public Works crews strive to open all streets within 10 hours of starting the plowing. On the following day, streets will be widened to the maximum width. The crews strive to keep all streets passable at all times, even in severe weather conditions.



## Attention Lake Elmo Businesses

*Add your listing and gain exposure with our online business directory*

Did you know that the City of Lake Elmo has an online business directory? Help us grow this beneficial community resource, by submitting your listing. To have your business included, download a business listing form at [www.lakeelmo.org](http://www.lakeelmo.org) or email your business contact information along with brief description of your business to [amacleod@lakeelmo.org](mailto:amacleod@lakeelmo.org).

# Significant Updates Proposed to City's Comprehensive Plan

The City of Lake Elmo continues to push forward on significant updates to the City's Comprehensive Plan, the City's guiding policy document related to land use, transportation, and other policies. These updates are required in order to implement future land use plans for the I-94 Corridor and Village areas. In terms of process, any major Comprehensive Plan update must be reviewed by all adjacent communities and jurisdictions (60 day review period) and by the Metropolitan Council (60-120 day review period). This review ensures consistency with all regional planning related to utility and transportation infrastructure, as well as school capacities. Currently, the I-94 Corridor and Village land use plans are in two different stages in the process:

- **I-94 Corridor.** The City Council authorized the distribution of a proposed Comprehensive Plan update to adjacent communities and jurisdictions on August 21, 2012. After this review is complete, the plan will be review by the Metropolitan Council. Once the review period is complete, the proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Plan may be adopted by the City Council to reflect the changes proposed in the I-94 corridor land use plan. The City expects these changes to be adopted in early 2013.
- **Village.** The Village land use plan is currently being



developed and progress is ongoing. The Village Work Group, comprised of members of the Planning Commission, City Council, and one at-large resident, continue to make progress on the land use plan and intend to present a proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment to the Planning Commission this fall. The City has held

multiple public meetings related to Village planning for the purpose of gathering community input. Once the Village land use plan is presented to the Planning Commission, Lake Elmo residents are encouraged to attend the public hearing to formally comment on the proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment.

In addition to the ongoing work of the I-94 Corridor and Village land use plans, Staff is currently working on efforts to ensure that future sewered development is of a high quality. These efforts include design standards, community theming, and form-based codes. These efforts include architectural and building site standards that the development community must comply with in order to pursue development in Lake Elmo. This work is significantly important in order to ensure quality implementation.

If Lake Elmo residents have questions regarding these planning processes, feel free to contact the Lake Elmo Planning Department.

## *Inaugural Lake Elmo Days Offers Fun for All*

The inaugural Lake Elmo Days celebration was held on Friday, September 7 and Saturday, September 8, 2012 in Lions Park. Activities included a collector car show, parade down Lake Elmo Avenue, business expo featuring more than 20 local organizations, kids carnival/teen sports challenge, pig roast, silent auction and live music. Here are a few photos of the event.



## Park Commission to Survey Residents on Use, Needs

The City of Lake Elmo Park Commission needs your help – and they want it before they decide to spend over \$900,000 of parkland dedication funds to improve the park system.

We have one signature park (Sunfish Lake), five full-service parks, and twelve additional open spaces for our 8,000+ residents to use – but before we invest any funds for improvement, we need to know what our residents think”, said Park Commission Chairman Pam Hartley.

In the spring of 2013, 500 randomly sampled residents will be asked about their park usage, park preferences, equipment needs, recreation programming, and bicycle and pedestrian trail placement in an effort to craft a five-year capital improvement budget. Residents not receiving a survey can voice their opinions via the City’s website.

“We need to know about needs for dog parks, disc golf, children’s play equipment, ball fields and where to put our trail system before we spend any money,” said Mike Bouthilet, Director of Public Works.



The Lake Elmo Park Commission will be conducting a survey in order to determine how best to allocate funds dedicated to park improvements. Sunfish Lake Park, pictured above, is one of the City’s 17 parks.

Key to the Park Commission’s learning will be resident’s response to bike / pedestrian trail placement throughout the City.

“We want to make sure that we are creating trail routes that connect our residents with areas such our downtown library, the high school, the Lake Elmo Park Reserve, and other important destinations. We want the future Lake Elmo to be walkable and bike-able”, said Shane Weis, a member of the Commission’s Trail Subcommittee.

### THE SOURCE

A publication of the City of Lake Elmo  
3800 Laverne Ave. N., Lake Elmo MN 55042 • 651-747-3900

#### Mayor

Dean Johnston

#### Council

Brett Emmons

Nicole Park

Mike Pearson

Anne Smith

#### City Administrator

Dean Zuleger

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POLICE-FIRE Emergency: 9-1-1

Non-emergency: (651) 439-9381



### Serve on the Park Commission

Applications are being accepted for the Parks Commission. Participate in guiding the future development and management of your City’s parks and trail system! Contact the City Clerk’s office for more information at 651-747-3900.