City council okays ranked-choice voting for municipal elections

At its April 16 meeting, the St. Louis Park City Council approved a vote of 7-0 an ordinance to amend the city charter to allow the use of ranked-choice voting for municipal elections (mayor and city council). The council was scheduled to vote on a second reading of the ordinance in early May. By state law, a unanimous vote of the council at both readings is required to pass the ordinance.

If the second reading is approved, the ordinance will officially become part of the city charter 90 days after passage and publication. At that time work will begin on the specifics of how ranked-choice voting will work in St. Louis Park.

The earliest ranked-choice voting for municipal elections (mayor and city council) would be implemented in November 2019, as municipal elections take place in odd years only. Ranked-choice voting is available for mayor and city council seats only; it would not apply to school board, state or federal elections.


Fatuma Irshat receives Human Rights Award

In March, the St. Louis Park Human Rights Commission presented the 2017 Human Rights Award to Fatuma Irshat. Fatuma was recognized for her engagement in government, facilitating Vision 3.0 meetings in her community and initiating a “Vote Local” campaign which included driving neighbors to vote and providing childcare.

Fatuma Irshat receives Human Rights Award
City council passes Climate Action Plan

In February, the St. Louis Park City Council unanimously adopted a Climate Action Plan with the goal of the community achieving carbon neutrality by 2040.

The plan began two years ago when a group of St. Louis Park students presented their concerns about climate change to the city council. Since then, St. Louis Park youth with the Roots & Shoots and iMatter organizations; the environment and sustainability commission; city staff; and other community volunteers have partnered to develop the Climate Action Plan.

The City of St. Louis Park is already helping lead the way toward carbon neutrality with its own buildings. In 2017, solar panels were installed at the Municipal Service Center and Fire Station 2. Four city buildings are now 100 percent electrically powered by renewable energy – city hall, the police department and both fire stations. Visit www.stlouispark.org/climate-action-plan for more information.

Powering by wind

St. Louis Park residents are taking advantage of Minnesota’s wind power by subscribing to Xcel Energy’s Windsourc®, a voluntary renewable subscription program that enables residents to easily source their electricity from wind.

As a local energy leader, St. Louis Park has a goal of sourcing 100 percent of our electricity from renewable resources by 2025. It takes less than five minutes to sign up and costs only $1 a month to participate. Now is the time to take action and join!

Sign up today by calling 800.895.4999, or fill out the online application at xcelenergy.com/Windsourc.

Apply online May 22 - 24 for two-bedroom public housing wait list

The St. Louis Park Housing Authority will only accept online applications for the two-bedroom public housing waiting list May 22 at 8 a.m. through May 24 at 4 p.m. Applications are available online only. Applicants must meet income and family size eligibility requirements. Visit www.stlouispark.org/public-housing for more details on eligibility and the application process.

Flavored tobacco ban in effect

As of May 1, 2018, the sale of flavored tobacco in St. Louis Park is no longer allowed. Menthol, mint and wintergreen are exempt from the list of prohibited flavors, as they have been in regular use for many decades and are not directly marketed to youth.

This is the latest step in an effort to limit the availability of tobacco products in the city in order to help reduce the number of youth who begin using tobacco. On Oct. 1, 2017, the legal age to purchase tobacco and tobacco products in St. Louis Park increased to 21.

Catch up on the State of the City

On March 8, Mayor Jake Spano, along with city councilmembers and city staff, presented the State of the City to more than 100 participants. View the ParkTV recorded event at www.youtube.com/slpcable. Visit bit.ly/sotc2018storymap for an interactive overview of 2017 highlights. Thanks to everyone who attended this event!
City moves to protect lower-income tenants of affordable housing buildings

In April, the St. Louis Park City Council adopted an ordinance enacting a tenant protection period following the sale of an affordable housing building, with the goal of protecting lower-income tenants in the city. St. Louis Park is the first city in the state to adopt such an ordinance.

The tenant protection ordinance was recommended by a city-convened workgroup that includes representatives from Minnesota Multi-Housing Association, the St. Louis Park rental community and representatives from agencies advocating for the preservation of naturally occurring affordable housing (NOAH). The purpose of the workgroup was to review and discuss the NOAH preservation strategies being considered by the city council and to seek general agreement on workable solutions.

NOAH properties are buildings where at least 18 percent of the units have rents affordable to households with incomes at or below 60 percent area median income (AMI); the 18 percent mirrors the percent of affordable housing required at 60 percent AMI by the city’s Inclusionary Housing Policy.

Under the ordinance, new owners of affordable housing would be required to pay relocation benefits to tenants if the owner increases rent, re-screens existing residents or implements non-renewals of leases without cause, within a three-month period following the ownership transfer of the property and the tenant chooses to move due to these actions.

The ordinance will take effect July 1, 2018. Prior to that date, city staff will be working on a notification process to ensure the St. Louis Park rental community — including owners, property managers and tenants — as well as tenant assistance organizations are informed and understand the requirements of the ordinance.

The draft goals and strategies of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan will be available in mid-May. Residents can review them and provide comments through an online survey at www.stlouispark.org/slp2040. The draft comprehensive plan will be available for review in late June.

Input invited on 2040 Comprehensive Plan

The comprehensive plan is an official document that guides the future of the City of St. Louis Park. It sets forth policies and programs that govern land use, transportation, public facilities, economic development and housing. The 2040 plan builds on the Vision 3.0 foundation and will integrate it into plan elements. The plan shapes the practical goals, policies and strategies that work toward the Vision aspirations. It also includes plans for each of the city’s 35 neighborhoods.

Developments underway in the city

1 – Beltline Boulevard Station site
4601 and 4725 Hwy. 7 & 3150 Monterey Ave. S.
On Feb. 5, 2018, the St. Louis Park Economic Development Authority entered into an agreement with Sherman Development Associates LLC to develop a mixed-use, transit-oriented development at the Southwest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT) Beltline Boulevard Station site.

Concept plans for the site include two residential buildings, office and retail building, substantial public space and a Metro Transit Park & Ride parking garage.

The developer hosted a neighborhood meeting on March 20, 2018, to introduce the development team and gather ideas and input from the community. They will be refining the site plan and development proposal in the coming months and will hold additional neighborhood meetings to gather feedback.

Developer: Sherman Development Associates LLC

2 – Via (PLACE)
5725 Hwy. 7
PLACE, a non-profit developer, has approvals to build a mixed-use, mixed-income, creative community near the intersection of 36th Street West and Wooddale Avenue, on both sides of the future Southwest Light Rail Transit Wooddale Station. Via includes 259 dwelling units, 110-room hotel, coffee shop, café, bike shop, makers space, a co-working space, e-generation, greenhouse and approximately one acre of urban forest. Via incorporates a mix of renewable energy sources, including an anaerobic digester, wind turbines and solar panels, which will provide heat and power for the development. The development intends to achieve Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification.

Via also includes a mobility plan to lessen the traffic impact in the area, including car-free living, car and bike share, multiple onsite live/work opportunities, transit passes and a local shuttle.

The EDA owns the property and intends to sell it to PLACE before construction. Construction is expected to begin in late spring.

Developer: PLACE

3 – Bridgewater Bank
4424 and 4440 Excelsior Blvd. & 3743 Monterey Drive
Bridgewater Bank is proposing a four-story, 84,000-square-foot office building that incorporates a bank branch, retail and service uses and three levels of structured parking. The proposed plans include a plaza at the corner of Excelsior Boulevard and Monterey Drive with outdoor seating, space for public art and landscaping. The first floor will include Bridgewater Bank’s customer branch and retail space. Floors two through four include the bank’s executive offices and opportunities for service uses.

4 – The Elmwood
5655 W. 36th St.
The Elmwood, a five-story, 70-unit, mixed-use development, was proposed in October 2017. The apartments will be restricted to residents ages 55 and above and include 53 market rate apartments, 17 affordable units at 60 percent area median income and approximately 4,400 square feet of leasable office/commercial space. The development also includes an outdoor amenity space and a quarter-acre of outdoor amenity space. Construction began in spring 2018.

Developer: 36th Street LLC

5 – Platia Place
9808 & 9920 Wayzata Blvd.
The city has approved an application to build a six-story, 149-unit apartment building and a six-story, 112-room hotel. This project features outdoor amenity space for both residents and visitors. The apartment building will include 15 affordable housing units, and both buildings will comply with the city’s Green Building Policy.

Applicant: SLP Park Ventures, LLC

Visit www.stlouispark.org/development-projects for a full list of development projects and a map.
IT’S TIME TO ADD “CLOSE YOUR DOOR” TO YOUR FIRE SAFETY CHECKLIST

You know how important it is to have working smoke alarms, escape plans, and a designated meeting place in case of a fire. But did you know that closing your doors in your home is also important for your safety? Closed doors can reduce fire growth, limit damage to your home, keep temperatures down, and can even save your life if you become trapped.

**MAKE A 900 DEGREE DIFFERENCE** - A closed door can mean reducing 1,000 degrees down to 100 degrees.

**TAKE IT DOWN A NOTCH** - During a fire, a closed door can keep carbon monoxide levels at 1,000 PPM versus 10,000 PPM if the door is left open.

**TAKE A BREATHER** - A fire needs oxygen to burn. A closed door keeps more oxygen in the room and away from the fire. When you exit a fire, make sure to close your door behind you to slow down its growth.

**DOZE SAFELY** - 50% of house fires happen between 11 p.m. and 7 a.m. Closing your doors before you hit the hay keeps you safe.

Learn more at closeyourdoor.org

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**What to do when the outdoor emergency sirens sound**

As severe weather season begins, be aware of when sirens sound, they are for real emergencies and are designed to warn people who are outdoors.

The siren sound is always the same, regardless of the type of emergency. If the sirens sound, DO NOT call 911 to ask what’s going on. Seek shelter and tune in to the TV or radio for information.

Sirens sound in St. Louis Park for three reasons:
1. A tornado warning has been issued by the National Weather Service, or a trained spotter saw a developing tornado in or near St. Louis Park.
2. Straight-line winds have been recorded in excess of 70 miles per hour.
3. Testing of emergency sirens takes place on the first Wednesday of the month at 1 p.m. All St. Louis Park sirens are checked by city staff for proper operation.

Be a lifesaver with PulsePoint

Last year, the City of St. Louis Park became the first PulsePoint community in Minnesota. You can help save the life of someone having a cardiac event in public by downloading the PulsePoint app.

Here’s how the PulsePoint app works. If the cardiac emergency is in a public place and 911 has been called, trained bystanders within 400 yards are alerted by the app of the need for CPR until police, fire or emergency medical services crews can arrive. The app also directs citizen rescuers to the exact location of the nearest publicly accessible Automated External Defibrillator.

PulsePoint is free and available for both Apple and Android smartphones. Once the app is downloaded, locate “agencies” under the menu tab, select St. Louis Park Fire Department and click “follow.” Under settings, select CPR, then acknowledge the message.

**Don’t make recreational fires a burning issue for neighbors**

The St. Louis Park Fire Department wants you to enjoy your small backyard recreational fire safely. The term recreational fire means “cooking fires and camp fires using charcoal or firewood for cooking or pleasure.” Fires used for debris disposal purposes are not considered recreational fires. Yard waste, including grass, leaves, branches, twigs, garbage and recycling, must be disposed of through your garbage hauler or at the city’s brush drop-off site.

Be a good neighbor

In addition to following the recreational fire permit rules, consider your neighbors as well. Remember that smoke and the smell of smoke often carries into neighboring homes, even on calm days. Not everyone likes the smell of a campfire, especially inside their home, and it can be an irritant. Young children, the elderly and people with asthma, lung or heart disease are especially vulnerable to wood smoke in the air. If you suspect an illegal burn, call 911 and let the fire department investigate and educate.

What’s required

All wood burning recreational fires within the City of St. Louis Park require a recreational fire permit, available at www.stlparks.org/recreationalfire-permit or at Fire Station 1, 3750 Wooddale Ave. S. For more information call 952.924.2595 during normal business hours. There is a one-time fee of $25 for a lifetime permit for the current resident living at the property.

- Recreational fires must be 25 feet away from any structure and 10 feet away from the property line.
- Only burn untreated, unpainted, clean, dry, aged firewood that is at least one inch in diameter. Fires that are unreasonably offensive or injurious to others as determined by the city will be required to be extinguished.
- Recreational fires are not allowed when prevailing winds are greater than 10 miles per hour or if the state has issued burning restrictions. Visit dnr.state.mn.us or pca.state.mn.us for details.
- Permit holder is responsible for conducting, controlling and extinguishing the fire. All fires must be extinguished completely to ensure there is no smoldering or potential for reigniting. Never leave a fire unattended and always have a garden hose or fire extinguisher nearby.
- Recreational fires are permitted Sunday – Thursday from 11 a.m. – 10 p.m., and on Friday and Saturday from 11 a.m. – midnight.

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Free hands-only CPR training is being offered at Fire Station 1, 3750 Wooddale Ave S., on the following dates:

- Saturday, May 19, 8:30 a.m.
- Wednesday, June 6, 5:30 p.m.
- Saturday, June 9, 8:30 a.m.
- Wednesday, July 11, 5:30 p.m.
Stay informed about road construction

The City of St. Louis Park has several road projects scheduled for this construction season. If you live or travel through these areas, sign up for email updates on the projects at www.stlouispark.org/construction-updates/sign-up to stay informed; visit www.stlouispark.org/construction-updates to learn more about the projects.

1. Aquila Avenue Rehabilitation: Mill and overlay on Aquila Avenue from West 36th Street to Highway 7 (Aquila)
2. Pavement Management – 2018: Pavement rehabilitation, concrete repair, utility replacement, sidewalks and traffic control changes (Elmwood, Brooklawn, Brookside)
3. Texas Avenue South and Division Street Improvements: Street, bikeway, sidewalk and utility improvements south of Highway 7 along Texas Avenue South and Division Street, in partnership with the City of Hopkins (South Oak Hill)
4. Wooddale Avenue Bridge Improvements over Highway 7: Planned this summer to improve sight lines for vehicles and build safe and comfortable pedestrian and bicycle facilities. See full article on this page. (Elmwood, Sorenson)
5. Alley Rehabilitation – 2018: Reconstructing gravel and asphalt alleys to concrete (Sorenson)

Hennepin County and MnDOT are also planning projects in St. Louis Park for the 2018 construction season. Sign up for email and text updates on county projects by visiting www.hennepin.us, then click “subscribe” in the top navigation bar; visit www.mndot.gov for state projects. Visit www.stlouispark.org/construction-updates for links to projects by the county and state.

Gail Dorfman named outstanding citizen

At the March 8, 2018 St. Louis Park State of the City, Mayor Jake Spano presented longtime resident Gail Dorfman with the city’s Outstanding Citizen Award. Dorfman is currently the executive director of St. Stephen’s Human Services in Minneapolis. She is also the District 6 council member for the Metropolitan Council, representing St. Louis Park, Crystal, Golden Valley, New Hope and a portion of Minneapolis. She served as vice chair of the Hennepin County Board of Commissioners from 2004-05; St. Louis Park Mayor from 1995-99; and an at-large St. Louis Park City Councilmember from 1991-95.

In his remarks, Mayor Spano said, “During her time in St. Louis Park, Gail’s fingerprints were on a number of signature initiatives, but none perhaps more impactful than her work to launch the city’s visioning process and her advocacy for creating strong neighborhood associations, which promote cohesion, identity and promoting community leadership.”

“The while a county commissioner, Gail continued to be an advocate for St. Louis Park through her work on the passage of the affordable housing incentive funds and transit-oriented development programs,” Spano continued. “As a result, since 2000, those programs have invested nearly $4.6 million in St. Louis Park and result in the creation of 851 housing units, 358 of which are affordable.”

Highway 7 slated for safety improvements

The City of St. Louis Park is aware of the community’s concerns regarding pedestrian safety in and around the Shoppes at Knollwood, and we share those concerns.

For the past year, the cities of St. Louis Park and Hopkins and Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) have been working on designing improvements in and around Highway 7, including features to enhance pedestrian safety.

MnDOT plans the following pedestrian improvements as part of its 2018 resurfacing project on Highway 7:

• An audible pedestrian system with countdown timers at the Aquila Avenue/Blake Road and Texas Avenue intersections with Highway 7.
• New sidewalk along the east and west sides of Texas Avenue between Highway 7 and the frontage road.
• Additional lighting at the Aquila Avenue/Blake Road and Texas Avenue intersections with Highway 7.
• Visit bit.ly/2K1bKI for more information.

In January 2018, the St. Louis Park City Council approved the following improved pedestrian connections to take place this summer:

• New sidewalk on the east side of Texas Avenue between Highway 7 and Lake Street, and on the west side of Texas Avenue between Highway 7 and Division Street. This will connect St. Louis Park’s South Oak Hill Neighborhood and nearby Hopkins residents to the commercial destinations north of Highway 7.
• Visit www.stlouispark.org/texas-division-improvements for more information.

In addition to these improvements, the City of St. Louis Park has been in contact with MnDOT regarding the possibility of installing a barrier along Highway 7 from Aquila Avenue/Blake Road to Texas Avenue, to help encourage pedestrians to cross at signalized intersections. Those discussions are ongoing.

If you have questions for city staff, contact Joe Shamla, senior engineering project manager, at jshamla@stlouispark.org or 952.924.2552.

Wooddale bridge set for makeover this summer

Improvements are planned this summer for the Wooddale Avenue bridge over Highway 7, intended to improve sight lines for vehicles and build safe and comfortable pedestrian and bicycle facilities across the bridge. Improvements will include:

• Widening the bridge deck by seven feet on each side, creating a four-lane roadway, a turn lane for the Highway 7 entrance ramps, and allowing for 12-foot-wide sidewalks and six-foot-wide bike lanes.
• Concrete walls will be pulled back as part of the bridge widening, creating better sight lines for drivers approaching Wooddale Avenue from the Highway 7 ramps.
• Landscaping at strategic locations will soften the feel of the corridor and complement the Southwest LRT Wooddale Station and PLACE development.

Construction sequencing is still being finalized. The goal is to keep half the bridge open during construction with one lane of traffic in each direction and one sidewalk open at all times. City staff continues to work with Southwest Light Rail Transit on installation of traffic signals and a regional trail underpass; however, no exact date has been identified.

If you have questions, contact Jack Sullivan, senior engineering project manager, at jsullivan@stlouispark.org or 952.924.2691.

Wooddale Avenue Bridge Improvements over Highway 7: Planned this summer to improve sight lines for vehicles and build safe and comfortable pedestrian and bicycle facilities. See full article on this page. (Elmwood, Sorenson)
Online crime map keeps residents informed

Stay informed about crime in the community with an online community crime map, which uses St. Louis Park Police Department records for updates. You can:

• View crime/incidents in your area, including type of crime, location, block-level, address, date and time.
• Sign up for neighborhood watch reports that automatically email a report of recent crime activity.
• Submit an anonymous tip about a crime directly to the police.
Visit www.stlouispark.org/crime-map to view the crime map.

Protect yourself with these safety tips

Worried about identity theft or fraud? Here are some easy ways to protect yourself:

• Don’t carry Social Security cards or birth certificates
• Don’t provide your credit card information, bank account information or Social Security number over the phone
• Don’t leave your purse or wallet in your vehicle or a public place

With spring and summer comes an increase in auto theft. Follow these easy steps to keep your vehicle and its contents safe:

• Lock the doors
• Don’t leave valuables in vehicle
• Don’t leave garage door opener in a vehicle parked outside

Call police as soon as possible to report a crime. For more safety tips and information on how to file a police report, visit www.stlouispark.org/police or stop by the St. Louis Park Police Department, 3015 Raleigh Ave. S.

Discard medicine safely with free disposal bags

The St. Louis Park police and fire departments offer free medication disposal bags to residents who are unable to visit a Hennepin County medicine disposal drop box.

Pickup locations
Pick up medication disposal bags Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at one of the following locations:

• Fire Station 1, 3750 Wooddale Ave. S. (enter north side of building)
• Police Department, 3015 Raleigh Ave. S. (located on the south side of the city hall parking lot)

Limit two bags per St. Louis Park household. Bags are for home use only. Residents interested in larger quantities may contact the police department at 952.924.2600 for information about purchasing the bags at cost.

Drop box locations
You can also safely dispose of medications by placing them in a Hennepin County drop box. Visit www.hennepin.us/medicine for locations and hours.

Sharps
The fire and police departments do not accept sharps, such as needles, lancets, syringes and used epi-pens. Visit bit.ly/2qqBRGi for sharps disposal options.

Register for Iftar dinner June 7

The St. Louis Park Multicultural Advisory Committee (MAC), in partnership with St. Louis Park Community Education and the St. Louis Park Police Department, is hosting its second annual educational Iftar dinner Thursday, June 7, 8 – 10 p.m., at the Lenox Community Center, 6715 Minnetonka Blvd. Call 952.928.6442 or visit www.slpcommunityed.com to register.

Ramadan is a holy month of the Islamic lunar calendar when Muslims abstain from food and drink from sunrise to sunset. Fasting during Ramadan, which falls between May 15 and June 14 this year, is one of the “five pillars” of Islam and is performed to learn compassion, self-restraint and generosity. A meal called an Iftar breaks the fast each day.

Bike patrol is on the trail of safety

May is Bike Safety Month and the St. Louis Park Police Department bike patrol will be out on two wheels all month, partnering with area businesses to promote bike safety on trails, in parks and on the roads.

Sgt. Dallas Williams named 2017 Officer of the Year

Sgt. Dallas Williams received the 2017 Robert Linnel Officer of the Year Award, which recognizes St. Louis Park police officers who demonstrate commitment to the mission and values of the police department and consistent principles of integrity, fairness and commitment to service in the St. Louis Park community.

Officers are nominated by their peers, with officers voting on the nomination to select the award winner. The award has been presented annually since 1989. Sgt. Williams’ nominations noted his efforts in creating efficiencies in workflows and processes, fostering a welcoming environment for those that he works with and continuously going above and beyond in all that he does. Congratulations to Sgt. Williams!

Keep up to date on all St. Louis Park Police Department events, crime alerts and more by following us on Facebook and Twitter!

@slppolice
Spring cleanup day is June 9
St. Louis Park’s annual spring cleanup day is Saturday, June 9, 8 a.m. – 1 p.m. at the Municipal Service Center, 7305 Oxford St. Any St. Louis Park resident may attend; proof of residency is required. Visit www.stlouispark.org/cleanup for additional details and pricing for accepted items.

Items collected for a charge (cash or check only)
- Bulky items (broken, stained, or unusable furniture, toys, remodeling supplies, scrap wood, equipment, etc.), appliances and microwaves, CRT monitors and box/tube TVs,* mattresses and box springs, and tires. Smaller trash items should be placed in your curbside garbage cart.
- Scrap wood, equipment, etc.), appliances and microwaves, CRT monitors and box/tube TVs,* mattresses and box springs, and tires. Smaller trash items should be placed in your curbside garbage cart.

*Note: Recycling box/tube TVs and CRT monitors through Hennepin County’s drop-off facilities is cheaper than other options, including the city cleanup.

Items collected for free
- Batteries (household only; no lead acid or vehicle batteries), bicycles, holiday lights and extension cords, computers (desktop towers and laptops) and peripherals (keyboards, etc.), cell phones and tablets, scrap metal, paper for shredding, fluorescent bulbs, textiles, and household goods for reuse (items must be in good working condition).

Not accepted
- Business waste, tree debris, yard waste, garbage, recyclables, vehicle batteries (including boat batteries), concrete, dirt, sod, rocks or household hazardous waste.
- Household hazardous waste should be taken to Hennepin County’s drop-off event June 14 – 15, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. at St. Louis Park Middle School, 2025 Texas Ave. S., or one of the Hennepin County drop-off facilities. Call 612.348.3777 for details.

GROWing organics participation
The Recycling Association of Minnesota (RAM) recently received funding for a project to increase curbside organics recycling participation in St. Louis Park. This project is being funded by a Green Partners GROW grant from Hennepin County and will run through the end of September. RAM will be out and about in St. Louis Park at citywide and neighborhood events talking to residents about joining the program and encouraging their participation. They will also offer workshops to help participants learn tips for success in organics recycling. These workshops will be available to both new participants as well as residents who are already in the program.

If you have a neighborhood event coming up and would like someone to come speak about organics, email lisa@recyclemnnesota.org or beth@recyclemnnesota.org, or call 651.641.4589.

A word about water and sewers
Water quality
If you are experiencing water taste and/or odor issues, please try running cold water for 5-10 minutes to remove older stagnant water from your service line. This brings water into your home from the city mainline and should be cold to the touch. If you are still having issues after trying this, call public works at 952.924.2562.

Disposable wipes are not flushable
Please don’t flush disposable wipes of any kind down the drain, even if they claim to be “flushable” or safe for toilets. The only items that should be flushed down a toilet are human waste and toilet paper. Disposable wipes don’t break down like toilet paper and will cause sewer backups in your private sewer service and/or city sewer mains, requiring costly and time-consuming repairs.

Fats, oils and grease doesn’t belong in the sewer
Please don’t dump fats, oils and grease into your kitchen drain or elsewhere. After being poured down the drain, these liquids solidify over time. Eventually, they will cause a sewer backup in your home and/or the city sewer service, requiring costly and time-consuming repairs. Instead, collect them in a heat-safe glass jar or in a can, then throw it in the garbage after it has solidified.

Mind the water meter when remodeling or siding your home
Recently, the city utility billing staff has noticed an increase in missed water meter readings due to siding work or basement remodeling in households. When making these improvements, make sure the water meter and meter interface unit (MIU) remain accessible after the work is complete, and that the wiring between the meter and MIU is not damaged. Follow these steps to prevent damage:

- Don’t put sheetrock over the water meter or MIU wiring in basements. Screws may accidentally pinch or break the wire completely.
- Don’t cover the MIU with sheetrock.
- When re-siding your home, don’t cut the MIU wire or throw the MIU away. Replacement MIUs are $100, charged to the homeowner.

We’re here to help. If you’re re-siding your home, contact public works at 952.924.2562 first. Public works staff can remove the MIU and reINSTALL it after the siding work is complete. The siding company will need to drill a ½ inch hole where the existing MIU is mounted so the MIU wire can be reconnected and the unit can be mounted in the same location.

Questions? Call public works at 952.924.2562.

Keeping a lid on dumpsters
The city has established rules for dumpsters to keep them from causing pollution. Dumpsters used for garbage, recycling or organics must be watertight and be covered, either with a lid or by being indoors. Uncovered dumpsters can gather rainwater, which is then dumped on the ground when the containers are emptied, eventually ending up in waterways. This water can contribute to water pollution in our lakes and rivers. Open dumpsters can also lead to litter if the contents are blown out by the wind.

If you live in a multi-family building or work at a commercial property and notice your outdoor trash and recycling containers are open, please close them. If they don’t have lids or are leaking, contact property maintenance staff to have the issue corrected. Thank you for helping keep a lid on pollution!
**Westwood Hills Nature Center Interpretive Center project update**

**Work continues on zero energy design for building**

At an early April study session, city staff presented an update to the city council on the design development phase for the Westwood Hills Nature Center interpretive center project. Based on council direction, the design team is working toward a “zero energy” certified building, which means that 100 percent of the building’s energy needs on an annual basis are supplied by on-site renewable energy.

The city council is scheduled to discuss the project again in May at a regular city council meeting, where they will consider approval of the design development phase and moving to the construction document phase.

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**Skate Park Grand Opening at Carpenter Park**

Monday, June 11

- Skateboarding demo
- Free lessons
- Games and prize giveaways
- Food trucks

3:30 – 4 p.m. – Sign up for skateboard lessons
4 – 5:30 p.m. – Lessons
5:30 – 6 p.m. – Quick demo and giveaways
6 – 6:30 p.m. – Ribbon cutting
6:30 – 7 p.m. – Demo
7 – 7:30 p.m. – Open skate and giveaways
7:30 – 8 p.m. – Open skate

Special thanks to the St. Louis Park Police Department in collaboration with the St. Louis Park Operations & Recreation Department

www.stlouispark.org

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**St. Louis Park Rotary Club Summer Concert Series**

All performances are free and filled with amazing talent! In the event of inclement weather, call 952.924.2567 for concert status.

**Free**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DAY</th>
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<td>June 13</td>
<td>7 – 7:45 p.m.</td>
<td>Teddy Bear Band</td>
<td>Kids &amp; Family</td>
<td>Oak Hill Park, 3201 Rhode Island Ave. S.</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>June 15</td>
<td>5 – 10 p.m.</td>
<td>Jonah and the Whales – Parktacular ($5 or free with button)</td>
<td>Rock, Techno, Pop</td>
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<td>Sa</td>
<td>June 16</td>
<td>7 – 10 p.m.</td>
<td>The Good, the Bad &amp; the Funky – Parktacular</td>
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<td>July 4</td>
<td>7 – 9:30 p.m.</td>
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**July 4th fireworks celebration!**

Aquila Park, 3110 Xylon Ave. S.
Concessions, vendors and live music! Stevie and the Table Rockers, 7 – 10 p.m.

Fireworks 10 p.m.

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**Westwood Hills Nature Center Interpretive Center project update**

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