

**City of Ramsey
Weekly Update
December 20, 2012**

1. **December 20, 2012**

Weekly Update

1.

Meeting Date: 12/20/2012

Information

Weekly Update

December 20, 2012

Attachments

Weekly Update 1

Form Review

Form Started By: Kathy Schmitz

Started On: 12/20/2012 03:46 PM

Final Approval Date: 12/20/2012

WEEKLY UPDATE

Administrator's Report



December 20, 2012

Weekly Calendar of Events

No City Meetings the Week of December 24



Council Update

Local Government Officials Meetings. Following are the dates for the 2013 Local Elected Officials Meetings: January 3, May 29, July 31, and October 30. The January 30 meeting will be held in Columbia Heights – more details will be sent out as it gets closer. The locations for the other three meetings are yet to be determined. There are a number of suggestions for changes to be made on how the meetings will operate. One of the changes that will occur is that the only notice that will be sent out will be sent to City Administrators – and they will be asked to pass the information on to the Mayor and Councilmembers. *Attached to the Weekly Update are suggested changes for the Local Government Officials Meetings.*

First Council Meetings of the New Year.

January 8, 2013:

5:30 – 6:30 p.m. - Work Session

6:30 – 7:00 p.m. – Reception in the main lobby for new council positions

7:00 p.m. – City Council

Immediately following City Council - HRA

Update on F&C-Residence at the COR Loan # 1 & Loan #2: The city made two loans to the Flaherty and Collins – Residence at the COR apartment project. The first loan was in the amount of \$1,420,000 – payable from the city's TIF District #1. The second loan, per the loan agreement of \$6,916,000, was payable from the issuance of a TIF bond. The City is now complete on payment out of these two loans, with final payment of the bond proceeds (8th draw request) to Flaherty and Collins made on Friday, December 14.

A summary of the outstanding loans are as such:

Loan #1:

City Funded	\$1,420,000
Flaherty and Collins Reimbursed to Date	<u>(120,000)</u>
Net Loan#1 Outstanding	\$1,300,000

Loan #2

City Funded	\$6,916,000
Flaherty & Collins Reimburse Bond Issuance Costs:	(91,000)
Flaherty & Collins Prepayment of Principal	<u>(500,000)</u>
Net Loan #2 Outstanding	\$6,325,000

Department Activities:

Building Maintenance

- Wash and vacuum all city staff vehicles
- Repair emergency exit door alarm
- Replaced cutting edges on snow removal equipment

City Clerk

- Resolutions for recording COR TWO plat
- Research – Youth First Board Members
- Getting Mayor and Councilmember oaths and certificates of election ready for new year

Engineering

- Sunwood Drive Project – We have received notification that the mast arms for the traffic signals will be shipped on December 28th, 2012 and the sub-contractor expects to receive them no later than January 2nd, 2013. Installation will occur following their arrival. Street lights are being installed this week.

Finance

- Meet with insurance agent – verify 2013 insurance coverage
- Submit 2013 final levies to Department of Revenue and Anoka County
- Meeting to improve communication for utility account setup on new properties
- Amend 2013-2017 CIP with engineering updates

Fire

- Notable Responses
 - 12/13- Smoke coming from roof of commercial building in the 7500 block of Hwy 10. Units arrived to find building filled with smoke, no active fire. Building was ventilated and smoldering fire extinguished.
 - 12/19- Fire coming from closet in a residential home in the 22000 block of Sugar Bush Rd. Unit arrived to find home fully involved. Crews extinguished fire, ventilated and checked for extension.
- Fire Administration
 - Investigation on residential home fire
 - Preliminary site plan review of McDonalds
 - Selection of 2013 Fire Officer positions
- Training this week: Fire Jeopardy

HR

- Prepared for and met with AFSCME regarding the next labor agreement
- Worked on policies, training, and reporting tasks

IT

- An unknown issue with Websense was causing our network traffic policy to use default traffic settings. This affected users that have higher access when browsing the Internet causing them to be unable to view some web pages they normally would be able to, but didn't affect most Ramsey staff. This problem has since been corrected.
- Computer replacements – Building maintenance, Public Works – Utilities and Police all received new or newer machines to replace old or failing equipment. Several more replacements are planned before the first of the new year. The PD now has a Forensic Investigations PC, which will assist officers in gathering necessary digital evidence.
- Citizen Request Management (CRM) is in full swing. Many users have already taken to using the system more frequently than the last Help Desk. Information and preparation are both still underway regarding the Public CRM, which will allow members of the community to ask questions or make requests of city staff for items such as snow removal & street maintenance.

Planning/Building

- Completed work flow analysis of new utility account set up for new construction (Building Permit issuance)
- Establish 'Guaranteed Walk In Office Hours' for Building Official (more information to come soon)
- Began scheduling potential Special Planning Commission Meeting for week of January 14th

Police

- **Gun Permits.** Since the tragic events in Connecticut last week, the police department has seen a rise in the number of Permit to Purchase requests in our office. The department has processed 31 applications this week and has issued over 350 for the year. Permits to Carry are issued through Anoka County and they have reported a sharp increase, also.
- **Happy Holidays.** From the Ramsey Police Department, have a happy and SAFE Christmas season.

Public Works

- Snow and ice continues to dominate our operations. Saturdays rain turned into Sundays ice requiring city wide salting Sunday and again on Monday. Tuesday staff cleared the upper floor of the parking ramp and responded to scattered reports of icy intersections. The plowing equipment has held up well with no major breakdowns during the storm and cleanup. Trails were cleaned up and are in good condition.

Utilities

- We have finished with shutting off all the water services to vacant abandoned homes, this is done by locating and exposing the water service curb stop located in the front yards and by using a special key the water is shut off below the frost line.
- Worked with Connexus energy on December 19th they needed to shut off power to our Lift station #7 located in the Brookfield development for up to eight hours. Since power is needed to move/pump the never ending sewer entering this site, we utilized our portable emergency generator to power the site while Connexus completed the needed

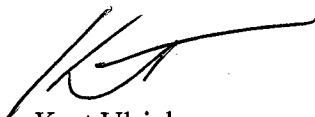
upgrades to their system. All work was completed and we are now back to normal power at the site.

Save the Date:

- **Annual City of Ramsey Holiday Party**– To be held on Friday, January 4, 2012. Please RSVP to Kathy Schmitz at kschmitz@ci.ramsey.mn.us or 763-433-9844. *Attached to the Weekly Update is the 2012 Holiday Party Flyer.*
- **Environmental Assessment Release for Proposed Reconstruction of Highway 10, Armstrong Boulevard in Ramsey.** Public Hearing set for January 9, 2012 in Ramsey. *Attached to the Weekly Update is a News Release regarding Proposed Reconstruction of Highway 10, Armstrong Boulevard in Ramsey.*
- **Anoka Area Chamber of Commerce Casino Royale Gala Dinner Fundraiser** – February 22, 2013 – Greenhaven. More details will follow as the event gets closer.

Have a wonderful holiday week with family and friends.

Best Wishes for a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!



Kurt Ulrich
City Administrator

Attachments: Suggested Changes for the Local Government Officials Meetings
2012 Holiday Party Flyer
News Release: Proposed Reconstruction of Highway 10, Armstrong
Boulevard in Ramsey
January 2013 Government Calendar
MN Transportation Alliance News Review December 20, 2012
News Release: Bunker Hills Compost Site Open for Two Weekends in January
(This information was published on the City's website as well.)
New Release: \$1 Million Property Tax Cut Approved for 2013 Anoka County Budget

Local Elected Officials Meetings Suggested Changes

The Local Elected Officials Meetings have been conducted for many years. The purpose of these meetings is to enhance communications between our local elected officials. Prior to these meetings there was not a time where the different cities, counties and other elected entities could get together share information and network. It is felt that these meetings have been effective in reaching those initial goals.

There is a concern that it would be helpful to have more elected officials attend the meetings. A workgroup reviewed our present practices and will be making some suggestions at our next Local Elected Officials meeting on November 28.

The following are some suggestions that are going to be proposed:

- The meetings would continue on a quarterly basis as they have in the past.
- The concept of cities highlighting what is happening in their city would be reinstated. We would rotate from one city to another each meeting. One meeting per year would be set aside for the county.
- Each meeting there would be an open forum for any elected officials who brief others on issues or things that are happening.
- It would be a goal to find topics of interest that would be varied and interesting to all elected officials. A yearly plan would be developed and we will solicit ideas from the members as to topics for the agendas. The meeting agendas will be detailed so the elected officials have a better understanding of what will be presented at each meeting.
- The meetings will start at 6 p.m. with the meal and the program will start at 6:15 p.m. The goal would be to have the meetings end by 7:30 p.m. It would mean that the meetings would start with some people still finishing their meal.
- The meal will continue, but there will be an effort to reduce the time spent at the meal and the cost of the meal. There will be a goal to have the meals cost less than \$10. The concept of bringing box lunches or other types of meals will be explored.
- We will continue to ask persons to RSVP their attendance and their wish to buy a meal. If they RSVP they will be responsible to pay whether they are at the meeting or not. All meals will either be pre-paid or paid at the event. There will not be billing after the event.

- The meetings will be rotated among the cities and staff will work with the officials of that city to find a spot where we can meet. Because of the lower meal cost and box lunches the sites very likely will not be restaurants.
- All local elected officials will be invited including city, county, legislators, school boards and also Met Council representatives.
- The meeting notices will go through the city manager, administrator, and superintendent of schools, etc. It will be the responsibility of that administrator to pass that information on to the elected officials in their jurisdiction.
- Members of the public may attend and purchase a meal; however, they have to make a reservation in advance. The dates and places of the meeting will be on the county website.
- Mayors Gamache, Ryan and Bartholmay will be the emcee and coordinators. They will work among themselves regarding themselves who will be highlighting and emceeing each meeting. Jerry Soma, county administrator will coordinate the agendas with the emcee and other local elected officials. Barb McKusick will continue to provide the logistics of the meetings such as location, food, etc.



Annual City of Ramsey

HOLIDAY PARTY

Boards/Commissions & Employee Appreciation Event

Friday, January 4, 2013
Fountains of Ramsey
7533 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey



AGENDA

4:31 pm - CASH BAR

6:00 pm – DINNER, PASTA BAR

Garlic White Wine Mushroom / Chicken Optional
Marinara – Chunky Tomatoes, Onions, Peppers /Chicken Optional
Salad, Sautéed Vegetables and Bread



6:30 pm - PROGRAM: ADDRESS FROM MAYOR AND ADMINISTRATOR

7:00 pm - 8:00 pm – SOCIAL HOUR & CASH BAR

8:00 pm – GAMES & ACTIVITIES, OLYMPIC THEME
Optional Bonfire/Ice Skating at the Draw

10:00 pm –PRIZES, END OF PROGRAM

Feeling competitive? Join us for team games and activities; winners will receive amazing prizes! The theme this year is Olympic style. Get together a team of four people, select a country and get ready to dominate the world! Team badges with your Country's flag will be provided at the event. Olympic Games shall include:



- International Family Feud
- World Bag Toss
- German Hammer Schlagen



Not interested in games and activities? No problem. Stick around for a social, enjoy refreshments at the cash bar or catch some fresh air while enjoying a bonfire at The Draw.



RSVP

There is no cost for this event (except for cash bar).
To RSVP please email Kathy in Admin by Friday, December 28th at kschmitz@ci.ramsey.mn.us
Please indicate if you plan to bring a guest.

ALSO... If you plan on staying for the Olympic Games portion of the night, please indicate your first two countries of choice.





Minnesota Department of Transportation

Metro District
1500 West County Road B-2
Roseville, MN 55113

News Release

Dec. 20, 2012

Contact: Kent Barnard
Office: 651-234-7504
Cell: 651-253-2803
kent.barnard@state.mn.us

For Immediate Release

Environmental Assessment released for proposed reconstruction of Highway 10, Armstrong Boulevard in Ramsey

Public hearing set January 9, 2013 in Ramsey

Roseville, Minn. – The Minnesota Department of Transportation invites the public to attend an open house and public hearing regarding proposed improvements to the intersection of Highway 10 and Armstrong Boulevard in the city of Ramsey. The proposed project would build a new grade separated interchange along with a grade separation at the BNSF Railway Crossing along with widening Armstrong Boulevard from two lanes to four lanes from Riverdale Drive north to Bunker Lake Boulevard (County Road 116). The improvements would provide additional safety, increase current and future multi-modal accessibility and improve motorist, bicycle and pedestrian mobility.

The open house and public hearing will be held on Wednesday, January 9, 2013 from 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive N.W. in Ramsey. The event will provide an opportunity for citizens to learn about the proposed project, make comments and ask questions. Officials from Mn/DOT, Anoka County and the city of Ramsey will be available to answer questions. There will be no formal presentation.

The Environmental Assessment documents state the purpose and need of the project along with the anticipated social, economic and environmental impacts. The document is available on the project Web site at <http://www.ci.ramsey.mn.us/US10-project-home>.

Copies of the EA/EAW also are available upon request in alternative formats to individuals with disabilities. The documents also are available for public viewing during business hours at the following locations:

-MORE-

An Equal Opportunity Employer



- Mn/DOT Metro District Offices, 1500 West County Road B2, Roseville, Minn.
- Anoka County Highway Department, 1440 Bunker Lake Boulevard, Andover, Minn.
- Rum River Library, 4201 6th Avenue, Anoka, Minn.
- Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minn.

Written comments can be mailed, prior to the close of the public comment period on January 23, 2013, to Mark Lindeberg, Project Manager, Minnesota Department of Transportation, 1500 West County Road B-2, Roseville, MN 55113.

To request an ASL or foreign language interpreter, call 651-366-4720. To request other reasonable accommodations, call 651-366-4718; the Minnesota Relay Service toll-free at 1-800-627-3529 (TTY, Voice or ASCII) or 711, or e-mail your request to ADArequest.dot@state.mn.us.

To request this document in an alternative format: Call 651-366-4720 or e-mail your request to ADArequest.dot@state.mn.us.

For Minnesota statewide travel information, visit www.511mn.org, call 5-1-1 or log on to www.mndot.gov.

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January 2013 Government

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
	1 New Years	2 7:00 pm Andover City Council Hans 7:00 pm Anoka Planning Commission Lynnette 7:00 pm Champlin Park & Rec Cory	3 7:00 pm Andover P & R Lynnette 7:00 pm Ramsey Board of Adj/Planning Comm Kevin 4:30pm Andover Update Gamache
7 7:00 Anoka City Council Chris <i>Cancelled Champlin ERC</i>	8 7:00pm Andover Planning Commission Lynnette 7:00pm Ramsey City Council & HRA Taylor & Matt 4:00pm Ramsey, Your council, your community McGlone & Elvig	9 11:00am Champlin Update Uglem	10 6:30 Ramsey P & R Kevin & Taylor 7:00am Anoka Update Rice
14 6:30pm District 11 School Board Mtg. Will & Taylor 5:00pm Anoka HRA Chris 6:00pm Champlin EDA mtg. 7:00pm Champlin City Council Cory	15 7:00 pm Andover City Council Hans	16	17 7:00pm Andover P & R Lynnette 5pm Cable Commission Will & Taylor 4:30pm Andover Update Howard 10:00am Anoka Update Schmidt
21 Martin Luther King Day	22 7:00pm Anoka City Council Chris 7:00pm Champlin Planning Commission Cory 7:00pm Ramsey City Council & HRA Matt & Taylor 4:00pm Ramsey, Your council, your community	23	24
28 6:30pm District 11 School Board Mtg. Will & Taylor 6:00pm Champlin COW mtg. 7:00pm Champlin City Council Cory	29	30	31 12/18/2012 10:36 AM

Subject: FW: Transportation Alliance News Review Dec 20, 2012

From: "Margaret Donahoe" <Margaret@transportationalliance.com>

Sent: Thursday, December 20, 2012 10:52:37 AM

Subject: Transportation Alliance News Review Dec 20, 2012



**Minnesota
Transportation
Alliance**

**News
Review**



December 20, 2012

Top Stories

[It Takes a Coalition to Raise a Transportation Tax](#) *Stillwater Gazette*

To nudge a gas tax hike or other transportation tax increases through the legislature is going to take a coalition, Capitol insiders believe.

And some question whether such a coalition currently exists.

But recent transportation finance reports have raised hope among funding advocates.

"I think we see this year as different," said Executive Director Margaret Donahoe of the Minnesota Transportation Alliance, a century-old group of business, labor, and government transportation advocates.

Donahoe points to the creation of a state transportation finance advisory group by Democratic Gov. Mark Dayton, which recently released a report suggesting vehicle tab fees, the gas tax, and other transportation taxes be considered for increases, as evidence that transportation is important to Dayton.

[Our View: U.S. 14 might be reason to increase gas tax](#) *Rochester Post Bulletin*

We'll start with the good news: The price of a gallon of gasoline dipped under \$3. In case you haven't been keeping track, the last time gas was this inexpensive was Dec. 20, 2010, when the average price in Minnesota was \$2.91 per gallon.

Dayton announced Zelle's appointment, but at the same time announced his opposition to the gas tax increase because "I think there's not public support for it."

That's an odd argument, and certainly a premature one. We think Minnesota drivers want roads and bridges that are well-maintained and replaced when necessary. Governing means you occasionally must make decisions that might not be terribly popular, so the question Dayton should be asking isn't whether people would like a gas tax increase — really, who would? — but whether the need is dire enough to justify it.

National

[113th Congress to Tackle Transportation Priorities](#) *Politico*

Transportation nerds need not worry about getting bored.

The 112th Congress may have reworked aviation law and handed the country a two-year surface transportation fix. But the 113th will face an even thicker slog of transportation priorities, funding fights and infrastructure reforms.

Lawmakers will tackle a long-delayed water resources bill, navigate rail issues ignored last session and consider another attempt to privatize the oft-maligned Amtrak. Congress will also jump back into a new transportation bill, resurrecting the question of how to pay for surface transportation priorities. The current transportation bill will expire at the end of 2014, and lawmakers will need to find a boost for thinning gas tax receipts. So far, Shuster is saying all the right things, Boxer said, by indicating openness to the gas tax, tolling and a fee on miles traveled.

[For Sale: US Highways and Bridges](#) *CNN Money*

The nation's roads are up for sale. But who should have control over them?

State and local governments are in desperate need of cash for all manner of road, building and bridge repair, and are increasingly turning to private money for funding.

But the involvement of private investors is raising concerns over how much control the public may lose over its roadways.

Companies putting up the money include construction and engineering firms like Bechtel and Samsung, and big banks like Goldman Sachs (**GS, Fortune 500**) and Merrill Lynch that aim to attract money from pension funds and insurance companies.

In exchange for the funding, the firms are getting an ownership stake in the projects. That means they'll get a cut of the tolls, and also be responsible for the maintenance.

State

[Dayton names MnDOT chief, rejects gas tax](#) *Star Tribune*

Gov. Mark Dayton on Wednesday rejected a proposal to raise gasoline taxes any time soon to fund highway improvements.

"I don't support a gas tax increase at this time, because I think there's not public support for it," Dayton told reporters.

The governor made his comments while introducing his new transportation commissioner, Charlie Zelle, who supported the gas tax hike while serving on Dayton's task force on transportation funding. Another member of the task force thinks Dayton shouldn't back away from that idea.

"He may be right politically, but from an economic point of view this is as close to a user tax as you can get," said Art Rolnick, an economist at the Humphrey School of Public Affairs. "I would urge him to keep this on the table. You're the governor, make it politically feasible."

[Morrow Leaving Legislature](#) *Mankato Free Press*

State Rep. Terry Morrow — a St. Peter Democrat who has provided more than a few surprises to area residents since 1995 — announced Wednesday that he will be resigning from the Legislature as of Jan. 7 to take a job in Chicago.

He was relentless in drawing the attention of state transportation department officials to deaths on Highway 14 in his district. His letters demanding action contributed to the first MnDOT pledges to speed up improvements to the two-lane highway near North Mankato.

Morrow also worked to bring state bonding funds to modernize the Minnesota Prairie Line, Sibley County's only railroad.

[Editorial: The Road System in Minn is Bloated](#) *Albert Lea Tribune*

This state, like so many states, needs to streamline its roadway system.

There is talk at the state Capitol of an increase in gas taxes to pay for highway repair; however, Gov. Mark Dayton opposes a gas tax increase. He says, correctly, that there isn't public support right now for a gas tax increase.

What the discussion about transportation in Minnesota needs to be about is this: Reducing the road system.

[Our View: Road funding needs innovation, but also money](#) *Mankato Free Press*

There is probably no tougher nut to crack than that of adequate transportation funding in Minnesota, but there is also nothing more basic to economic prosperity than an efficient and safe transportation system.

So, once again, Minnesota leaders must come up with a way to fund the most critical needs first and at the same time develop a long-term funding solution. The recent report from Gov. Mark Dayton's Transportation Finance Advisory Group suggested increasing the state gas tax, vehicle registration fees and metro area special sales taxes.

Regional/Local

[Golden Valley vote keeps Bottineau LRT alive](#) *Star Tribune*

The last barrier to planning for the Bottineau light-rail line vanished Tuesday when the Golden Valley City Council voted 3-2 to support the line's proposed route.

Had the council voted "no," as it did last summer, it would have effectively killed development of the line in the near future. Other cities along the 13-mile line, as well as the Minneapolis Park Board, have supported the route. But authorities said planning for the line could not continue without Golden Valley's approval.

[I-94 Traffic Flow Tops List of Priorities for Central MN Transportation Alliance](#) *St. Cloud Times*

Improving traffic flow on Interstate Highway 94 between St. Cloud and the Twin Cities tops a new list of priorities for 2013 from a group that focuses on Central Minnesota transportation.

The Central Minnesota Transportation Alliance (CMTA), a group of private-sector leaders that partners with local governments and public-sector groups, approved the list last week.

Expanding air service at St. Cloud Regional Airport, including a possible Chicago link, is the second priority on the list for 2013. Extending Northstar commuter train service to St. Cloud is the third priority.

The CMTA also says it's crucial to increase overall funding for the state's roads, bridges and transit systems.

Other States

[Iowa Chamber Group Backs Increase In State Gas Tax](#) *Des Moines Register*

The Iowa Chamber Alliance, representing business groups in Iowa's 14 largest metro areas, is proposing an increase in the state's gasoline tax, plus a host of tax reform measures.

Recommendations for raising the state's fuel tax have varied from 10 cents to 15 cents per gallon, "and we think that is a reasonable amount," said John Stineman, the state group's executive director. But he emphasized Wednesday that business leaders want any extra gas tax revenue spent on roads that receive the heaviest traffic.

Iowa's road-building lobby has been working to develop a coalition of business groups to push for a gas tax increase in the next legislative session.

[Tough Road for Transportation](#) *Metro West Daily News*

Massachusetts leaders have some bad news, but they don't know how to tell us.

Political leaders have known about it for a long time, but have been afraid to face up to it. Public policy types have been talking about it for years, unheeded if not exactly unheard. Business leaders see it as a problem for the present and a cloud hanging over the region's future.

The bad news is that the state's transportation is broke. Worse than broke, really. It has to borrow money to pay its current bills. It has no money and no plan for billions in current and projected maintenance costs. And solving those problems will just restore the state's 20th century roads, rails

and bridges. Then we've got to build the 21st century transportation system the state must have if it's going to thrive.

If it had been taken care of, the Longfellow would be due for an \$81 million facelift, but it wasn't, so now it's expected to cost three times that much

[Governor's Transportation Plan Should Accelerate Local Road Projects](#) KOAA

Governor John Hickenlooper announced plans Friday to spend \$1.5 billion over the next five years to fast track transportation improvement projects across the state. The Responsible Acceleration of Maintenance and Partnerships (RAMP) program will give the Colorado Department of Transportation an additional \$300 million each year to spend on highway projects.

"It is likely that the projects chosen will be associated with improvements to the three strategic corridors in our region: I-25, Powers Blvd and U.S. 24 west," MacDonald said.

Hickenlooper estimates the money will create or sustain more than 10,500 jobs.

[Maryland Transportation Funding: Business, County Leaders Urge State To Raise Money For Roads, Transit](#) Huffington Post

Business leaders and county officials are urging the governor and General Assembly to increase Maryland's gas tax or find another way to raise hundreds of millions of dollars for road and transit projects -- even in the face of public opposition.

More than 100 people packed a hearing room in Annapolis on Wednesday to discuss strategies. They want to persuade legislators to raise the money needed to develop major new transportation projects, not just maintain what the state already has.

Transportation Day at the Capitol

February 7, 2013

Kelly Inn, St. Paul

Register Today: www.transportationalliance.com

Margaret Donahoe
Executive Director
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Watch What The Alliance Can Do
For You!

[Click Here to Watch our New 3
minute Video](#)





COUNTY OF ANOKA

OFFICE OF PUBLIC INFORMATION

GOVERNMENT CENTER
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December 19, 2012

MARTHA WEAVER

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E-mail: martha.weaver@co.anoka.mn.us

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Bunker Hills Compost Site Open for Two Weekends in January

Anoka County's two compost sites located in Bunker Hills Regional Park and Rice Creek Chain of Lakes Regional Park closed for the season November 30, 2012. However, the Bunker Hills compost site, located one mile north of Main Street on Hanson Boulevard in Coon Rapids, will re-open for two weekends in January to receive Christmas trees and evergreen garland (not heavily bound with wire), as well as other types of yard and tree waste. Examples of acceptable yard and tree waste include leaves, grass clippings, garden waste, weeds, brush, logs, and stumps.

Bunker Hills Compost Site Special January 2013 Winter Hours

Saturday, January 5 and 12: 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

Sunday, January 6 and 13: Noon-4:30 p.m.



The Bunker Hills and Rice Creek Chain of Lakes compost sites will re-open on April 1, 2013, weather permitting.

Residents are asked to remove all wire from evergreen boughs and garland before bringing them to the compost site. Christmas trees should be free of tinsel, and any ornaments, wire, and stands. There is a \$1.50 charge per Christmas tree.

-more-

Bunker Hills Compost Site Open for Two Weekends in January – Add 1

There is a fee of \$4 per vehicle for debugged leaves, grass clippings, and garden waste up to four cubic yards. An additional 50 cents per yard will be charged in excess of four cubic yards. There is a variable fee for tree waste disposal, depending on the size and amount of the material. Residents are asked to keep yard waste separate from tree waste.

Note: Most garbage haulers offer Christmas tree collection as part of their service. Some municipalities collect and chip Christmas trees for mulch. Contact your hauler or municipality to obtain specific pickup information for your area.

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MW:de



COUNTY OF ANOKA

OFFICE OF PUBLIC INFORMATION

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(763) 323-5700

December 7, 2012

MARTHA WEAVER

Public Information Manager

Direct #763-323-5744

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Contact: Martha Weaver, Public Information Manager, 763-323-5744, or e-mail: martha.weaver@co.anoka.mn.us

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

\$1 Million Property Tax Cut Approved for 2013 Anoka County Budget

The Anoka County Board of Commissioners has voted in favor of a 2013 budget that decreases the property tax levy by more than \$1 million. This is the second consecutive year the county board has voted to reduce the property tax levy.

“We’re just beginning to emerge from one of the most devastating economic periods in our country’s history,” said Board of Commissioners Chair Rhonda Sivarajah. “It’s our responsibility as leaders to not overburden our citizens just as they’re starting to get back on their feet. We will move forward with the excellent and diverse array of service as we always have, while staying focused on our priorities of sound management, a diverse tax base, low debt burden, and healthy reserves,” said Sivarajah.

With the 2013 budget, the county board continued its focus on paying down debt, streamlining service delivery, and applying innovative ideas in order to cut spending without cutting service to citizens. Cost-saving measures totaling \$1,013,299 enable a net tax levy of \$97,517,399. That amount represents a 1.03 percent decrease from 2012.

“Every day we demonstrate our commitment to public safety and service while maximizing the value of every tax dollar we collect,” said Sivarajah. “At the same time, we diligently work to maintain our AAA level of financial management, which was just reaffirmed by international rating agency Standard and Poor’s”

-more-

\$1 Million Property Tax Cut Approved for 2013 Anoka County Budget – Add 1

Innovations, collaborations, and cost saving measures:

- **Investing in Technology**

Anoka County continues to invest in technology for efficiency and effectiveness and sharing the results with other communities to pass on the savings. When the State's medical assistance program shifted a portion of its mental health clients to various managed care providers, Anoka County had to come up with a new way to bill insurance companies for the case management services it provides. Because the State's billing system wasn't programmed to handle this type of transaction, a team from Anoka County's Information Technology and Fiscal Services Departments developed a custom Microsoft Access application that is compatible with the State system. The new application pulls client data and county case management activity from the State system and reformats it to a new Access database that enables timely, accurate billing to insurance companies. Officials in Hennepin County were so impressed after seeing a demonstration of the application, they've asked for a copy for their own use. "Using in-house resources and expertise, we were able to customize an application at a significant cost savings," said Anoka County Information Technology Committee Chair Robyn West. "We were happy to share our solution with Hennepin County and, in fact, continue to look for more opportunities to have a mutually beneficial exchange of information and procedures in the future."

- **License Centers Shrink and Expand**

Hours of operation for Anoka County's five license centers have been adjusted to better serve customer needs and save taxpayer dollars. Effective in 2012, the total number of license center service hours increased to 54 hours per week. However, weekly business hours at individual license centers were cut from 47 to 42 hours per week. The change in hours will save up to \$90,000 in labor costs annually. It also allows greater flexibility to schedule staff as business volume dictates. A study of customer service needs at each center showed that staggering the open and close times at each site provided better and more tailored service unique to each location's customers.

- **Voluntary Separation Program**

In 2013, eligible employees will again have the opportunity to take advantage of a voluntary separation program. We have provided incentives that enabled long-term employees to make responsible and mutually beneficial decisions about retiring from county service. The resulting vacancies have allowed cost-effective staff restructuring and some new hires, most often at lower wages. In addition, we have reorganized and eliminated approximately 50 positions in the past three years.

\$1 Million Property Tax Cut Approved for 2013 Anoka County Budget – Add 2

- **Online Licensed Child Care Locator**

The recently launched Anoka County Licensed Child Care Locator is accessible online via the county's Child Care Licensing webpage at www.anokacounty.us/childcare. The locator was designed to help parents find a licensed child care provider in a neighborhood that's convenient for them and review a potential provider's licensing status. Users can search by address, map location, license class, or city. The information comes directly from Anoka County's Child Care Licensing files and is applied to the county's geographic information system technology.

- **Highway Department**

Over the past two years, the Anoka County Highway Department has undertaken the largest investment in Anoka County's transportation infrastructure in the county's history. Significant projects have included the award-winning rebuilding of CSAH 14 (Main Street/125th Avenue) through Coon Rapids, and Blaine.

- **Fiber**

The Connect Anoka County project is nearing a successful completion to bring a 286-mile fiber optic network linking 145 public buildings – police, fire, public works, libraries, K-12 schools, colleges, city and town halls, and community buildings – in and adjacent to Anoka County.

2013 Budget Key Facts and Figures:

• Proposed 2013 budget	\$243,989,819
• Proposed 2013 net levy	\$97,517,399* (-\$1,013,399 or -1.03% from 2012)
• County program aid reduction	-\$917,666
• Certified foreclosures	2011 1,995
	2010 2,259
• Average home value:	2008 \$213,000
	2009 \$196,800
	2010 \$177,500
	2011 \$173,900
	2012 \$155,400
	2013 \$141,800

*County line only, does not include rail levy or school district levy.