

Woodbury City Update

February 2017 • Volume 18, No. 2



Police officers Adam Olson (left) and Garrett Kissner talk with a resident over coffee at the City Center Caribou Coffee in 2016.

Coffee, conversation with a cop

Community members are invited to discuss community issues over coffee with Woodbury police officers through the city's Coffee with a Cop program.

"This is a unique opportunity for community members to ask questions, share concerns and learn more about the Police Department's work," Woodbury Police Chief Lee Vague explained. "Coffee with a Cop provides an informal, neutral space to build relationships."

The program aims to advance the practice of community policing through improving relationships between police officers and community members one cup of coffee at a time.

"All community members are invited and encouraged to attend," Vague added. "We hope you will join us."

Dates, times and locations for 2017 sessions will be posted on the city's website at woodburymn.gov once they are established. Details also will be announced via Twitter (@WoodburyMNPS), Facebook (facebook.com/WoodburyPoliceFireEMS), and to subscribers of the city's InTouch email notification system accessed via the city's website.

If you have questions, or if you are a local business interested in hosting a Coffee with a Cop session, contact Michelle Okada, public information officer, at (651) 714-3600 or michelle.okada@woodburymn.gov.

Coffee with a Cop is sponsored by the Woodbury Public Safety Board and community business partners hosting the events.

City launches new and improved website

Offering a more attractive design and improved navigation, a new City of Woodbury website debuted last month. The new site better reflects current technology while providing a streamlined menu system for users.

"The previous site was launched in 2011," said communications specialist Megan Beck, who manages the website. "It has been well used, with more than 1.3 million page views in 2016. However, much has changed in technology over the past five years, making this redesign necessary for an increasingly mobile world."

The new site incorporates a host of features to better serve the community. They include:

- A mobile-friendly design, making the site accessible on smartphones, tablets and other mobile devices
- Homepage with featured videos, latest news and calendar
- New interactive Parks and Trails Map, allowing users to reserve buildings and open air shelters and view field schedules
- More powerful search tool, allowing users to quickly find what they are looking for
- Improved accessibility for people with disabilities

Popular e-services such as the InTouch email notification system and recreation program registration have been incorporated into the new site.

New web address with secure certificate

As part of the website launch, the city's website address has changed to woodburymn.gov. The site also has a Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) certificate, making the site more secure for users.

"Sites with an SSL certificate encrypt the connection between a user's web browser and the web server," said Robert James, the city's Information



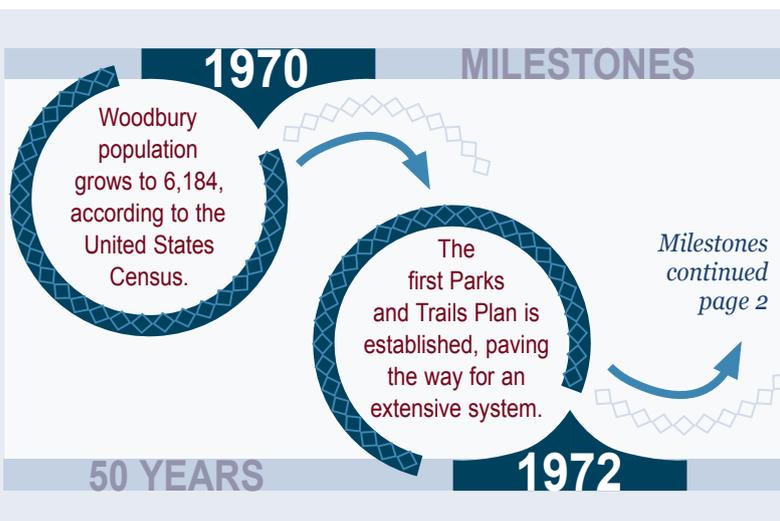
Technology director. "This protects any data from being seen by someone else on the internet."

Update bookmarks

If you had bookmarked the city's homepage or a favorite page such as Bielenberg Sports Center or recreation registration on the previous website, you will need to create a new bookmark.

The new website was constructed using a content management system that will make maintenance easier and more efficient for city staff. The city teamed with Revize Software Systems out of Troy, Mich., to design

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Council Perspective

By Mayor Mary Giuliani Stephens

Community survey: Check your mailbox and respond; your opinion matters

In early February, 1,500 randomly-selected residents will receive an important mailing from the city - the 2017 community survey.

Through the survey, residents rate city services and the quality of life in Woodbury. They also give their opinions about some specific issues and potential projects.

The survey will be conducted via mail in partnership with the National Research Center (NRC), a Colorado polling firm. NRC conducts community surveys all over the country, allowing us to compare our survey ratings to approximately 70 comparable communities (between 55,000 and 75,000 population) nationwide. The data gathered also will be compared with up to approximately 40 municipalities in Minnesota.

There are several benefits to completing the survey through the mail. First, mailed surveys generate a response rate between 30 and 40 percent. In addition, a mailed survey is more conducive to people who work non-traditional hours. The survey also will be available online for those who prefer to submit their feedback electronically.

The results provide valuable feedback to the City Council about our ongoing services. We use the data collected to determine whether we're meeting citizens' expectations and where we need to make improvements.

Because we gain so much helpful information from the survey, funds are set aside to conduct community surveys on a biennial basis. This has allowed the city to track its

performance through a phone or mailed survey every two years since 1993.

Planning and measuring performance

The survey also functions as a planning tool. After receiving the results, the City Council will undertake the strategic planning we conduct every two years to identify issues that deserve a more detailed approach than our day-to-day business operations generally allow. As part of identifying strategic issues, we look at how well the community is doing in a number of areas that are crucial to the success of the city. Citizen opinions expressed in the survey directly relate to many of the critical areas we review.

The survey results also are a key component of our performance measurement program. Like any successful organization, the city needs to know how satisfied our customers (citizens) are with the services we provide. So our staff tracks more than 250 performance trends in city services. For example, we monitor the average amount of time it takes to completely plow streets after a snow storm. By monitoring performance, the Council can determine if service is improving or declining, and whether we need to adjust resources in a particular area.

A number of the performance measures are tied directly to data coming out of the community survey. For instance, we track the percentage of residents who rate a service as excel-

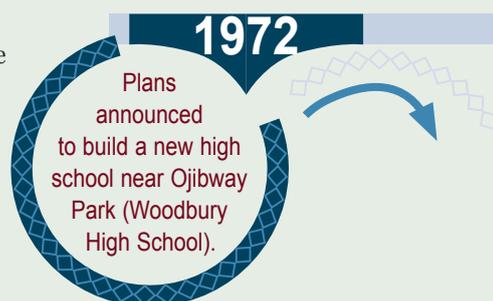
lent, good or fair. When we prepare the city budget, the performance measures help the Council evaluate what we are getting for the money we spend and whether we are providing citizens with good value for the tax dollars they pay.

Specific issues and projects

While it's important to collect data about ongoing services and the quality of life in Woodbury, it also is helpful to ask citizens about some specific issues and potential projects. This year, questions were added to help gauge police service levels and community interactions with our law enforcement officers. Residents also will be polled about transit services such as the Gateway Gold Line being studied that would run along Bielenberg Drive from the Woodbury Theater to the Union Depot in St. Paul.

The City Council recognizes that participating in the survey requires a time commitment from citizens. The 2017 survey contains about 30 questions. But we hope that those receiving the survey in the mail this month will be willing to take the time and participate. Your input is valued and it truly does impact the City Council's decisions.

Milestones...from page 1



Human/sex trafficking forum planned March 1

Every year, millions of men, women and children all over the world become victims of human/sex trafficking.

This form of modern-day slavery, as defined by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, involves the use of force, fraud, or coercion to obtain some type of labor or commercial sex act.

Assistant Washington County prosecutor Imran Ali and Woodbury Police Detective Paul Kroshus will lead a human/sex trafficking presentation from 6:30 to 8 p.m. Wednesday, March 1, in the Education Room at the Woodbury Public Safety Building, 2100 Radio Drive. Both men serve on the Anti-Sex Trafficking Coalition established by Washington County in 2015.

The March 1 presentation will focus on:

- emerging human/sex trafficking trends in Washington County and around the Twin Cities;
- indicators for those who are being trafficked;
- laws penalizing the trafficking suspect;
- what law enforcement is doing differently today than in the past to prostitution; and
- phone apps every parent should understand.

Authorities also will discuss resources for trafficking victims and recent Washington County cases in which individuals were exploited.

"Sex trafficking has no borders, these crimes are taking place all over the country, and Woodbury and Washington County are not excluded," Kroshus explained. "Law enforcement is taking a different look at the players involved by charging the subjects and providing resources to the victims."

For more information about the forum or human trafficking, contact Michelle Okada, Woodbury Public Safety information officer, at (651) 714-3600 or michelle.okada@woodburymn.gov.

The Woodbury newsletter is published 10 times per year by the City of Woodbury and mailed to all residents and businesses. Send comments to: Woodbury City Hall, 8301 Valley Creek Road, Woodbury, MN 55125-3330. Phone: (651) 714-3500. Email: jason.egerstrom@woodburymn.gov.

Mayor: Mary Giuliani Stephens. **Council Members:** Christopher Burns, Andrea Date, Julie Ohs, Amy Scoggins. **City Administrator:** Clinton Gridley. **Communications Coordinator:** Jason Egerstrom.

The City of Woodbury is subject to Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act. In accordance with the act, the Woodbury newsletter is available in other formats. Call Jason Egerstrom, (651) 714-3500; TDD: (651) 714-3568.

Help prevent sewer backups

Utilities workers are noticing an increasing amount of fats, oils, grease and other debris being deposited into the city's sanitary sewer lines. In order to minimize the risk of a sewer backup, it is important property owners are careful about items they flush and put down drains.



“Property owners and managers must understand that just because it is possible to get an item down sinks or flushed down a toilet doesn't mean it is the proper way to dispose of it,” said Jim Westerman, Utilities Division superintendent. “When excessive amounts of fats, oils, and grease or other inappropriate waste are put into the sanitary sewer system, they can cause sewer lines to plug and pumps to fail, leading to sewer backups into homes and businesses and possibly cause serious property damage.”

How residents and businesses can help

The Utilities Division conducts routine cleaning of the sanitary sewer system with approximately 70 miles of sewer pipes inspected and pressure cleaned each year in order to remove the troublesome restrictions that can cause sewer backups.

Property owners can help keep sanitary sewer lines clean by only disposing of appropriate waste in the sanitary sewer system. Some items that cause backups are diapers, shop towels, fats, oils, grease, cloth rags, baby wipes, cleaning wipes, bandages, feminine napkins, prophylactics and stringy material such as floss or hair. Please dispose of these items in the trash so the system continues to flow properly and your basements and businesses remain dry. Also remember that even though some products such as baby wipes are labeled as “flushable” it is not appropriate to flush them.

Waste traps and separators

Some businesses – such as restaurants and car washes – are a major producer of the troublesome fats, oils, grease and sand that cause the sewer lines to clog. These businesses must have waste traps or separators that filter out the fats, oils, grease and

sand to prevent it from entering the sanitary sewer system.

In addition, city ordinance requires traps and separators are properly maintained in efficient operating condition. Failure to comply with this ordinance will result in an administrative fine.

Sewer backups

If your sanitary sewer backs up, you should take immediate action. Turn off all running water. If the backup ceases or recedes, you probably have a plugged private service line and should contact a private contractor to initiate repairs. If the backup continues to grow despite shutting off all water use, it could be a plugged sewer main, and you should contact the Woodbury Utilities Division immediately. If the problem is in the main sewer line, city employees will take action to correct the problem. This service is available day or night, seven days a week, including holidays.

If you believe you are experiencing a backup during non-business hours, call the Washington County Sheriff's Office at (651) 439-9381. The Sheriff's Department will contact one of the city's Public Works employees to respond to the problem.

Questions should be directed to the Utilities Division at (651) 714-3720 or publicworks@woodburymn.gov.



Summer jobs available with the city

Are you currently seeking summer employment opportunities lasting from three to six months?

The City of Woodbury is now taking applications for summer seasonal positions for our maintenance, golf course and recreation programs.

Positions available include:

- Pee Wee sports coach
- Youth sports coach
- Puppet Wagon puppeteers
- Playground program leaders
- Camp Carver leaders
- Lifeguard
- Bielenberg Sports Center summer outdoor fields attendant
- Tennis instructor
- Maintenance in the Utilities, Parks and Streets Divisions (three-month and six-month positions available)

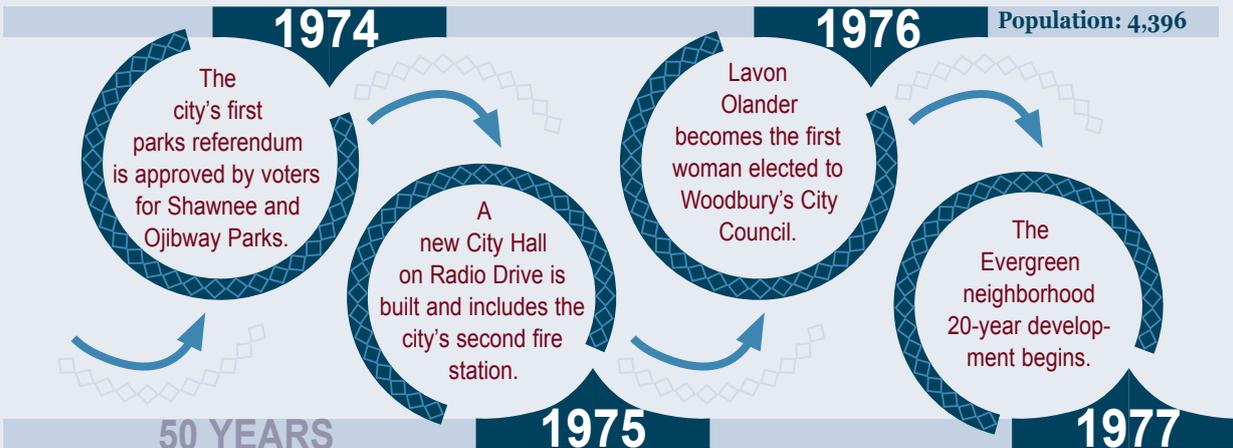
There are also several positions available at Eagle Valley Golf Course, including:

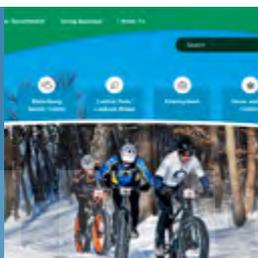
- Golf course maintenance worker
- Food and beverage attendant (must be at least 18 years old)
- Starter/ranger
- Outside service

The minimum age requirement is 16 for golf course and recreation positions. Applicants for the Utilities, Parks and Streets maintenance positions must be at least 18 years old.

Interested individuals should apply online at woodburymn.gov. Select the blue “Employment” tab on the home page. Call (651) 714-3500 or email hr@woodburymn.gov with any questions.

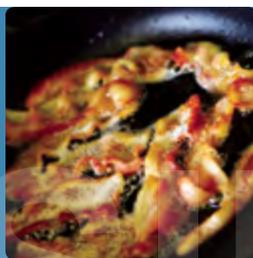
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Keep grease and fats out of drain

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State of the City, Feb. 26 at Central Park

Mayor Mary Giuliani Stephens will deliver her State of the City presentation Sunday, Feb. 26, at 1:30 p.m. in the amphitheater at Central Park, 8595 Central Park Place. All are welcome and encouraged to attend.

The presentation will feature updates about development, parks and recreation, and city projects. It also will incorporate key milestones in Woodbury's history as the community celebrates its 50th anniversary this year. Mayor Stephens will take questions from the audience at the end of her presentation.

Following the mayor's speech, enjoy cupcakes from Dorothy Ann Bakery and a performance by music students at Crosswinds Arts and Science School and the Woodbury High School choir.

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Fun times for the whole family at Central Park

Keep spring fever at bay with free family-friendly Performances in the Park at Central Park! A full line-up of laughs and live music are scheduled throughout February and March:

- The Riverside Trio, rockin' swing
Thursday, Feb. 9, at 7 p.m.
- Dirty Shorts Brass Band, New Orleans style brass band
Thursday, Feb. 23, at 7 p.m.
- Crosswinds Arts and Science music students and Woodbury High School choir
Sunday, Feb. 26, at 2:30 p.m.
(following the mayor's State of the City presentation)
- Lazy Does It, traditional jazz band
Thursday, March 9, at 7 p.m.
- Doc Rockets Traveling Circus of Mystery, comedy (no school day)
Monday, March 13, at 2:30 p.m.

- I94 Xpress, rock/jazz band
Sunday, March 26, at 2 p.m.

All concerts are free (no reservations required)!

Other upcoming Parks and Recreation events at Central Park:

Sundae Bingo: Create tasty ice cream sundaes while enjoying a variety of bingo games. The delicious event is scheduled for Sunday, Feb. 19, and Sunday, March 19. Each session will begin at 2 p.m. and will last about 90 minutes. Pre-registration is required and dates are filled on a first come, first served basis. The event will take place in Valley Creek Room B and costs \$4 per person (\$6 per person for non-residents). To register, visit WoodburyRecreation.com or call Woodbury Parks and Recreation at (651) 714-3583.



Central Bark Pet Expo: Pet enthusiasts and local pet businesses can meet with a variety of organizations to learn about the latest pet news. The free event will take place on Saturday, Feb. 18, from 10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. For safety reasons, no personal pets will be allowed at this event.

Woodbury Central Park is located at 8595 Central Park Place.

Website...from page 1

and create the site. In addition, city staff across all departments have updated content and assisted in construction of the site.

During the design process, the city once again engaged Fredrickson Communications to perform usability testing, as it did with the 2011 website redesign. The company conducted one-on-one sessions with local residents and business owners to measure ease of using the site and to obtain feedback on the look and feel of the new website.

"The usability testing was a vital part of the design process," Beck said. "The feedback was used to improve the website's functionality. The city greatly appreciates the contributions of all involved in this phase of the project."

Comments about the new website are welcomed. Contact (651) 714-3525, or megan.beck@woodburymn.gov.