

MAPLEWOOD LIVING

JANUARY 2017



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The Perfect Shoes for Winter



Enjoy the snow this winter! Explore Maplewood Nature Center trails on snowshoes. Rental fee is \$5 per pair.

Call ahead to ensure availability (651-249-2170). If you have your own snowshoes, the Neighborhood Preserves are great places to explore in winter.

maplewoodmn.gov/preserves

Maplewood's Plow Drivers are Hard at Work



Though some might not be too happy about it, winter has arrived in full force, and the Maplewood Public Works Department is ready to help the City dig out. Here's a list of tips and reminders to help the City's plow drivers complete their vital work.

- Parking of any vehicle on any street or road between the hours of 2:00 am and 6:00 am is prohibited

year round. Plowing around parked cars is one of several difficult tasks a plow driver faces. Leaving your car on the street during a snow event can result in the plow not being able to clear the road in front of your home or your neighbor's.

- Parking on a City street or road for more than 30 minutes during the time between the start of a snowfall event and the completion of plowing activities is prohibited.
- Leaving your vehicle on the street during snow events and plowing activities can lead to a ticket or towing.

Steve Love, the City Engineer and Deputy Public Works Director, offers up a few simple things residents can do to make plow driver's jobs just a little easier.

"One of the biggest things is to not crowd the snow plows," Love explained. "It's important that plow drivers have enough space to work and vehicles are far enough back to be seen as plows are frequently required to backup.

Love added that the time it takes to plow all of the city streets is typically less than eight hours, but can vary significantly depending on the amount, rate, type of snow/ice, and the timing of the snow event. It is the City's goal to have sidewalks and trails plowed within 48 hours after the completion of street plowing operations.

Love also said that he recently went on a ride-along with one of the City's plow drivers, an experience that further showed him how difficult driving a plow can be.

"I definitely learned how important it is to give the plow enough room," he said. "And many drivers forget that just because they can see the plow, that doesn't mean the plow can see you."

- continued on page 7

Elected Officials

Nora Slawik: Mayor(651) 738-7099
 nora.slawik@maplewoodmn.gov
 Marylee Abrams: Councilmember(651) 249-2000
 marylee.abrams@maplewoodmn.gov
 Kathleen Juenemann: Councilmember(651) 771-3670
 kathleen.juenemann@maplewoodmn.gov
 Melinda Coleman: City Manager(651) 249-2055
 melinda.coleman@maplewoodmn.gov
 Bryan Smith: Councilmember(651) 888-0085
 bryan.smith@maplewoodmn.gov
 Tou Xiong: Councilmember(651) 444-0531
 tou.xiong@maplewoodmn.gov

Frequently Called Numbers

City Hall (651) 249-2000
 Maplewood Community Center (651) 249-2230
 Recreation (651) 249-2120
 Public Works (651) 249-2400
 Police Non-Emergency (651) 767-0640

Visit the City website at www.maplewoodmn.gov for the meeting schedule of the City Council, Commissions and Boards.

To advertise in this newsletter call Heidi Carey at (952) 212-7333 or email heidi@careycommunications.org.



A Very Merry Breakfast

On December 14, Maplewood's senior leadership team bought and prepared breakfast for city staff. The meal included pancakes, baked eggs, sausage, and Minnesota's own Spam. It was an opportunity for the City's leadership to show their appreciation to staff for another great year in Maplewood!

1: City Manager Melinda Coleman and Fire Chief Steve Lukin showed off their ugly Christmas sweaters!

2: Fire Chief Steve Lukin and Police Chief Paul Schnell were hard at work in the kitchen.

3: City Manager Melinda Coleman and Director of Citizen Services Karen Haag served up breakfast with a smile.

4: Environmental and City Code Specialist Chris Swanson took home top honors in the ugly sweater completion.

5: Information Technician Alex Geroncin finished a close second in the clash of ugly sweaters.

6: Police Records Specialists Theresa Corcoran, Stephanie Shea, and Jenny Hendricks also showed off their holiday gear.



1



3



5



2



4



6



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Mayor Slawik's Q&A



As we move into 2017, I want to take a moment to reflect and say thank you for a very productive year. As Mayor, the Council and I, worked hard on a number of important issues in partnership with staff and residents.

A few of my favorite highlights of 2016 include the new walking and biking ADA accessible trail at our 70-acre Fish Creek site off of Carver Avenue and Henry Lane. Another highlight is our partnership with the YMCA as they began operating the MCC on November 1st. The City loses between \$250,000 and \$450,000 per year on the operational costs of the MCC and this partnership will save money.

I am also proud of the road projects we completed on Beebe and Lakewood-Sterling roads to fix deteriorating pavement conditions. Lastly, the City partnered on the opening of the new \$150 million 3M R&D lab, keeping high paying jobs in our City.

What are you looking forward to in 2017?

In 2017, I look forward to working with Council, staff and residents to continue making our city a great place to live, work and play. We have a number of economic development projects in the works including the Hazelwood Medical Office Building across from St. John's, senior housing as part of the Villages at Frost English, and numerous restaurants and businesses.

What have you been hearing lately from residents?

While out at various events, residents have been giving me very positive feedback about the direction Maplewood is moving. Recently, a resident called complimenting the work of City staff on building racial equity. Staff worked with 13 other cities, counties and jurisdictions in a year-long program to address equity issues. This work will continue in 2017.

I do get complaints as Mayor, and most often they are about challenging neighbor situations, with chronic code violations that are incredibly complex. I am working hard to address these situations with City staff and partnerships at a variety of levels.

My hope is that 2017 will be a year of kindness, peace and understanding for all us in Maplewood. It is a privilege to be your Mayor, and I look forward to working with all of you to continue to make our city a wonderful place to live, work, shop, play and enjoy.

Maplewood Says Goodbye to Karen Haag



Since she was hired as City Clerk in 1996, Karen Haag, who is now the City's Director of Citizen Services, has graced City Hall with her sense of humor, friendship, loyalty, and candor.

During her 20-year career in the City, she attended more than 460 City Council meetings, 350 Council Workshops, and 125 special meetings.

During that time, Karen worked with six mayors, 18 different City Council members, and six city managers. In addition to overseeing City Hall's Department of Motor Vehicles, passport counter, and business licensing, she also managed more than 40 primary and general elections.

City Manager Melinda Coleman, who worked with Karen for many years at City Hall, shared the following touching remarks at the December 12 City Council meeting:

"Congratulations, Karen, on your final city council meeting and upcoming retirement. 20 years is a milestone many will not achieve.

I want to thank you for your service to me, our Council, residents and staff. You have contributed to the Maplewood brand of providing excellent services in elections, DMV, record retention, public data requests and so much more.

You have been a leader in our County with preserving and advancing the integrity of the election process. You have trained several staff and election judges for the city.

In addition you have been an amazing mentor to your staff. You have left a legacy of prepared staff that are ready for your departure. This is good! Although they will miss you greatly.

I appreciate your sense of humor and the resilience you have shown when working in difficult situations. You have helped me remember the "why" of what we do and to keep things in perspective whenever things are challenging or tough.

Your support of me and the management team has been immensely appreciated. Your honesty and candor made our management teams more meaningful and productive, most of the time!

Your leadership, team spirit and social director role for employee events will be greatly missed by all! Enjoy your new free time and I wish you many happy adventures in retirement."

2016 Highlights

2016 was a challenging, exciting, and rewarding year for the City of Maplewood. Here's a brief rundown of some of the City's 2016 successes.

CITY MANAGER



- The City successfully negotiated a partnership between the Maplewood Community Center and the YMCA. Under the YMCA's guidance, we expect the facility to offer its members stronger benefits and programming. Additionally, the partnership frees up finances the City will be able to

use in other areas.

- In January of 2016, the City held its first State of the City event. Mayor Nora Slawik and city staff were on hand to discuss the City's recent challenges and successes. The Mayor also gave attendees a sense of the City's upcoming initiatives. The event will be held this year on January 12.
- The City's Business Retention team has been hard at work to build relationships with current and potential businesses to continue strengthening the City's role as a regional economic hub.
- The City's first Communications Department began its work in earnest this fall and we're eager for that department to help the City share more information and stories with our residents and business owners.
- Ellen Paulseth, our new Finance Director, has been on the job since the spring and has already made a positive impact on our financial management. We look forward to utilizing more of Ellen's leadership and expertise.

Melinda Coleman, City Manager (651) 249-2055
melinda.coleman@maplewoodmn.gov

FIRE/EMS



- In October of 2016, Ramsey County fire departments implemented a new Closest Unit Dispatching Procedure. This procedure will send the closest available fire or medical unit to structure fires and cardiac arrest notwithstanding the jurisdiction of the emergency. This will allow for a faster response to these high priority emergency

calls in many cases, as traditional jurisdictional boundaries are essentially erased allowing for the closest unit to respond.

- The Fire/EMS department received several grants in 2016. Via a scholarship from the National Fire Protection Association, the department sent two Firefighter/Community Paramedics to a falls and fire prevention training program titled Remembering When. After receiving this training, the department's administration

and community have developed a deployment plan that will involve home visits, group presentations and outreach to reduce the risk of falls and fire for older adults. This program will begin in January of 2017.

- The department received a grant from the Minnesota State Fire Chief's Association and Minnesota Fair Plan to purchase 200 stove top fire extinguisher units, smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms. These devices will be offered to residents as part of a home visit program that will also begin in January of 2017.
- In a collaborative effort with the Police Department, the Fire/EMS department wrote a grant to equip police patrol vehicles with Automated External Defibrillators (AED's). The Firehouse Subs Public Safety Foundation awarded a grant for a total of 16 AED's that have been placed in patrol vehicles. This grant will reduce the amount of time that it takes for an AED to get to a patient's side and will improve public safety through enhanced cardiac arrest response.

Steve Lukin, Fire Chief (651) 249-2802
steve.lukin@maplewoodmn.gov

IT



- In 2016, the IT Department implemented new software that will provide the infrastructure needed to bring additional services provided by City Hall online. In 2017, exciting new additions will be made to the City's catalog of services that will be available to you through your internet connection.

Mychal Fowlds, IT Director (651) 249-2923
mychal.fowlds@maplewoodmn.gov

PARKS AND RECREATION



- Maplewood residents can be proud of their beautiful park system. Implementation of the Park System Master Plan got underway in 2016 with new playgrounds constructed at Vista Hills and Goodrich parks, exercise pods installed along the City Hall pond trail, and site work began at the Gladstone

Savanna playground. The much anticipated Fish Creek trail is now in, giving visitors a great opportunity to experience Maplewood's newest natural area.

- Our Parks Department will continue to offer quality recreation and environmental programming. Special park events and programs drew hundreds of residents. Wakefield Park was bustling during WOW events' Warrior Challenge in June and Touch-a-Truck and Carnival Fun in August. The City and partners received a grant to continue KID City, a program engaging youth in exploring the power of laughter and in addressing real-life challenges in the community.

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The Maplewood Nature Center's pollinator program brought hundreds of school children to Fish Creek to learn about pollinators.

Duwayne Konewko, Environmental & Economic Director (651) 249-2330
duwayne.konewko@maplewoodmn.gov

FINANCE DEPARTMENT



• It has been a year of transition for the Maplewood Finance Department with a new Finance Director starting in May. The department continues to provide quality financial services and is currently emphasizing long term financial planning and debt management. The finance staff has been

building long-term financial planning tools, which will allow the Council and managers to better understand the long-term implications of budget decisions and set goals for outstanding debt.

• The finance department again received two awards from the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada during the year. The Distinguished Budget Presentation Award was awarded to the Finance Department for the 2016 budget document and the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting was awarded for the 2015 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report. The Finance Department plans on continuing to participate in the GFOA award programs for all future financial documents.

Ellen Paulseth, Finance Director (651) 249-2902
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Michael Thompson, Public Works Director (651) 249-2403
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CITIZEN SERVICES



• This was a tremendously busy year for Citizen Services with duties related to the Federal Election. We are pleased to report that 83% of eligible registered voters reported to vote. With new absentee voting laws in place permitting voters to vote by absentee without having a reason to do so, city

staff processed 5,323 absentee ballots. 1,892 ballots were received by mail and 3,431 individuals voted in person at City Hall. Additionally, new voting equipment was implemented and was received very favorably by residents.

• After careful consideration and input from you, our citizens, the City will continue to operate as a Federal Passport Acceptance Facility. In 2015, staff processed 2,882 passports; with eight business days left in December we had already processed 3,432 in 2016. We look forward to serving customers in the future as passport services continue.

• Our Motor Vehicle Department continues to thrive with close to 84,000 transactions performed in 2016. This, in conjunction with processing all of the City's business licenses ranging from food establishments to intoxicating liquor licenses, we estimate that we have assisted more than 100,000 individuals at our service counters. We look forward to continuing these services in 2017.

Karen Haag, Citizen Services Director (651) 249-2002
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PUBLIC WORKS



• The Public Works Department received the 2016 Saint Paul Area Chamber of Commerce Leaders in Local Government Award for Excellence in Public Works Operations.

• The Public Works Department continued implementing its Living Streets policy that was utilized during street reconstruction

and led to innovative management of storm water runoff and drainage projects to help improve local watersheds.

• The Department completed the first Gas Franchise Fee pavement rehabilitation project in the Lakewood-Sterling area that featured 2.56 miles of reclaimed and paved streets. That type of project fixed issues with existing pavement, such as potholes and patching, and improved the quality of life for residents in the area. The project started as a grassroots effort by Maplewood residents looking for the City to accelerate street repairs beyond the five-year capital improvement plan.

ENVIRONMENTAL & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



• Maplewood's Environmental and Economic Development Department (EEDD) works to guide growth and construction in the City that enhances economic development while conserving natural resources in accordance with the goals and policies of the City Council. In 2016, these goals have been

achieved through the department's guidance of the approval and construction processes for many projects throughout the City.

• Some of the notable projects include the construction of Hazelwood Medical Commons (2495 Hazelwood St N), Frost English Village – Phase 1 (1265 Frost Ave), Conifer Ridge Apartments (Legacy Village), Costco building expansion (1431 Beam Ave E).

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Notable projects that have been approved and soon will begin construction include ALDI (3000 White Bear Ave), Chick-fil-a (3035 White Bear Ave), Rice Street Shoppes (2158 Rice St N), Beyond Self-Storage (1315 Beam Ave E), and a new AT&T Building (3070 White Bear Ave).

- In addition to the notable commercial development projects our department processed and inspected more than 1,000 residential building permits throughout 2016. These permits were for work ranging from new single-family homes to finishing a basement or installing an egress window. These inspections ensure current residents are making safe investments for their homes and provides assurances to future residents that the work was done correctly. The EEDD department also conducted more than 100 restaurant inspections ensuring residents have safe places to eat out with their families. And lastly in 2016, EEDD oversaw the city's trash and recycling programs which work to ensure the protection of public health and safety and promote city cleanliness and livability.

Duwayne Konewko, Environmental & Economic Director (651) 249-2330
duwayne.konewko@maplewoodmn.gov

HUMAN RESOURCES



- Online recruiting for new employees: the City of Maplewood has streamlined its hiring and recruitment process to recruit the best and brightest talent. Having top notch employees helps ensure a stable organization in which services can be delivered to residents in an efficient and

effective manner. Our new on-line recruiting presence allows job postings to reach a broader audience by synchronizing postings on indeed.com and government-jobs.com. Also, once candidates enroll in the system, they can easily apply for any future jobs that are posted.

- Racial equity: the City of Maplewood recognizes that we have a diverse population and we acknowledge that disparities do exist. About 33 percent of the 40,000 residents of Maplewood are people of color. We are working towards an inclusive community.

- How does this look? This is a community where we want all residents to feel included. The biggest percentage of racial and ethnic groups are African American, Hmong, Karen, Latino, and people of east African descent. However, only about 9-10 percent of the Maplewood employees are people of color. It is the goal of the City to diversify its workforce so that it is more reflective of the people we serve. Additionally, we are planning implementation of a racial equity training experience with an emphasis on implicit bias. We believe it's critical that our staff be more

aware of the ways implicit bias can lead to inequities and disproportionate treatment. Racial equity work is important; and the scope and implications of this work is massive. We are committed to developing a good process, but we know there is not a one size fits all solution. By building a base and conducting an assessment, progress can be made and measured.

Mike Funk, Assistant City Manager/Director of Human Resources (651) 249-2053
mike.funk@maplewoodmn.gov

POLICE DEPARTMENT



- Implementation of domestic violence joint prosecution effort with and between the Ramsey County Attorney's Office, the Maplewood Police Department, and Maplewood's City Prosecutor.

- Active participation in the Countywide "Start by Believing" campaign focused on improving response to sexual assault.

- Comprehensive review of the recommendations of the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing with the goal of priority implementation in 2017.

- Implementation of a City Council appointed "Use of Force Work Group" to review, analyze, and recommendations to the department's use of force policy.

Paul Schnell, Police Chief (651) 775-1520
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On December 8th, Maplewood celebrated the grand opening of the Golden Corral in the former Old Country Buffet location at 3000 White Bear Avenue. In this photo, Mayor Nora Slawik chats with owners Dale and Tari Maxfield. For more details, contact the Maplewood Golden Corral at (651) 888-2347.

Finance Department Earns Recognition



The Finance Department team with the award from the GFOA. From left to right: Accounting Supervisor Joe Rueb, Accountant Carole Anderson, Administrative Assistant/Payroll Tech Brenda Oswald, Finance Director Ellen Paulseth, and Accounting Technician/Accounts Payable Judy DeBilzan.

The City of Maplewood's Finance Department has received the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting from the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) for its comprehensive annual financial report (CAFR). The Certificate of Achievement is the highest mark of

recognition in governmental accounting and financial reporting.

"Our Finance Department does excellent work for our City and for our residents," City Manager Melinda Coleman said. "This award is well deserved and I'm pleased our finance team has been recognized for their dedication and excellence."

Cont. from Page 1 - Plow Drivers

A few more tips

- Don't allow children to make tunnels or snow forts on or near the boulevard.
- Don't shovel or snow blow snow into the street. It is a violation of city code and state statute to plow, discharge, push, or throw snow onto, or across, a public street. It can also be a safety hazard to the general public, plow equipment, and operators.
- Trash cans and recycling bins should be placed on your driveway, not in the street.
- Remember to clean the space around your mailbox to ensure timely mail delivery.
- If you have a fire hydrant in front of your home take some time and clear out the snow around it. In an emergency, this will help fire fighters to quickly respond to a fire.
- During heavy snowfalls, plow drivers may focus on heavily traveled roads such as Frost Avenue and priority segments which serve hospitals, schools, and health care facilities, such as Hazelwood Street.



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Maplewood's Unused Prescription Drop Box Now Open



A drop-off for unused or unwanted prescription medications is now available at Maplewood City Hall near the Police Department's night entrance. The drop box is a collaboration between Ramsey County Public Health and the Police Department's Property & Evidence Unit.

In Minnesota and across the nation, there has been widespread concern about the increase of heroin related overdose deaths. The resurgence of heroin abuse appears to be a consequence of what often starts as abuse of prescription pain management and other narcotic medications.

When these unused prescription medications remain stored in home medicine cabinets, they can be easily accessed,

which can quickly lead to abuse and dependency. Once dependent, highly potent and sometimes deadly, heroin can be less expensive than prescription medications.

What can be dropped in the box?

Any and all unused or unwanted prescription and over-the-counter medications, including: medication "blister" packages, creams and gels, IV bags, medication patches, sprays, capsules & pills, inhalers, liquids, vials, and powders.

You do not need to remove the labels from prescription bottles. Privacy is of the highest importance and the labels are never viewed.

What is NOT accepted?

Needles or syringes (Sharps) and medications from healthcare facilities, doctors' offices, or veterinary clinics.

SAVE THE DATE

Maplewood

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More to come in the February issue.



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