

Fall 2013

THE CITY OF
LAKE ELMO

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THE SOURCE

Your source for City news and information

Moody's Affirms City's Aa2 Bond Rating

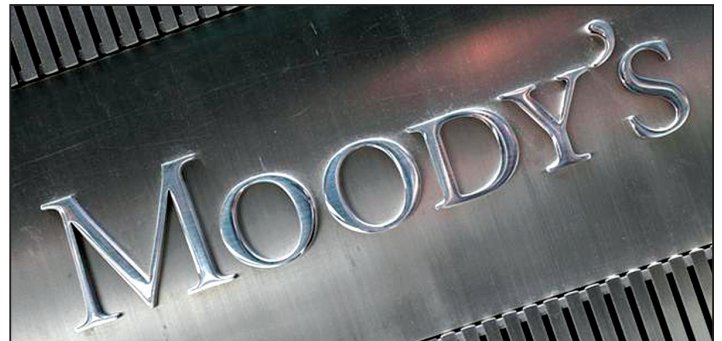
Moody's Investor Service has issued an Aa2 bond rating for the City of Lake Elmo citing conservative budgeting, annual surpluses, low debt burden, and favorable pension liability as credit strengths. The credit rating was issued as part of a \$5.7 million bond offering that the City intends to use to pay for two sewer projects and a road project in the fall of 2013.

Specifically, Moody's noted that Lake Elmo's affluent tax base in the Twin Cities Metro and the fact the City maintains a healthy reserve fund (80+%) as reasons to assign the Aa2 rating to the community. Other Minnesota communities comparably sized to Lake Elmo are normally rated at the Aa3 level according to Moody's rating matrix.

The City of Lake Elmo's finance team, led by Mayor Mike Pearson, traveled to Chicago to make a presentation to the Moody's credit rating team in late August.

"By all accounts it was one of the better presentations Moody's has seen in a while," said Paul Donna of Northland Securities, Lake Elmo's Financial Advisor.

In other finance news, the Lake Elmo City Council recently approved a policy that requires developers seeking to use city bonding for infrastructure to commit to 100% payment via assessment or developers agree-



The City's finance team presented to Moody's Investor Service in August. The formal written policy was adopted to ensure taxpayers would not be responsible for any costs associated with private development.

"Our goal with this policy is to protect the taxpayer. By reducing this philosophy to an official written document developers and landowners will know up front what is expected of them," said Council member Wally Nelson, who is also a member of the City's Finance Committee.

The City recently executed against this policy in September when 100% of the landowners involved in the sewer and water project along I-94 between Keats Avenue and Inwood Avenue waived their ability to appeal assessments and agreed to pick up all costs of the project without objection.

City of Lake Elmo Thanks Community, Event Sponsors

The City of Lake Elmo would like to extend a thank you to everyone in the commu-

nity who attended the event this year. The two-day event, which was held on Friday, Sept. 6th, and Saturday, Sept. 7th, included a parade, business expo, family activities, public safety demonstrations, food, and live music. An estimated 1,500 people attended.

LAKE
ELMO Days

Lake Elmo Days was made possible by help from countless volunteers and the support from the following businesses and organizations: Lake Elmo Jaycees, Lennar Homes, Acti-Kare Responsive In-Home Care, Lawson Law Firm, Fury Motors, Lake Elmo Bank, Omega Events, Focus Engineering, Northland Securities, and Rockpoint Church.

A Lake Elmo Days photo gallery is available online on the City's Facebook page, at www.facebook.com/LakeElmoMN.

The Mayor's Corner



Hello Neighbors,

I hope this edition of The Source finds you well and enjoying the beginning of another beautiful Minnesota fall. With space limited and news aplenty, I'll begin.

There are many steps being taken in the City in terms of growth and working toward a better Lake Elmo. Please see the special insert to this edition titled "Improving Lake Elmo," which details the various street and utility projects that are currently underway. I'd like to point out a couple of highlights:

- You will notice changes on Highway 5, both near and through downtown. Safety improvements are being made including lane-striping and a raised pedestrian refuge near the elementary school. While further safety discussions continue, our hope is these initial changes will encourage a more urban feel to this corridor, which should encourage a lower rate of speed from drivers. A "thank you" is in order to the MnDOT and MnDOT representative Adam Josephson for responding to our concerns with tangible improvements.
- Perhaps more significantly (at least from a historical perspective), the council has ordered sewer service to our downtown. The line is expected to be complete by the end of this year and most downtown residences and businesses can anticipate a 2015 service hook up. We thank Washington County staff and commissioners, specifically commissioner Gary Kriesel, for moving up their 2017 Lake Elmo Avenue reconstruction project to 2015. This allows a "one and done" disruption, a less costly process, and of course, a more immediate relief for residents whose septic systems are non-compliant.

If you've never gone, put "Lake Elmo Days" on your calendar for next year. The event takes place every year on the first weekend after Labor Day. This year's event included the first annual Battle of the Bands competition featuring a variety of talented area musicians, more than 50 vendors, local food, and games and activities for kids. Quite a good time was had by all. Thanks to city staff, especially Alyssa MacLeod, our firefighters and the many other volunteers for making this another Lake Elmo success.

If you have questions, comments, critiques, or would just like to offer ideas, please email me at mpearson@lakeelmo.org, or come visit me at the next "Visit with the Mayor" session, which will be held at 9 am, Wednesday, October 9, at the Lake Elmo Library.

Mike Pearson, Mayor

Lake Elmo Collaborates with County on Storm Clean-Up Efforts



A collection site was created on the northern grounds of the Lake Elmo Park Reserve to temporarily store brush, branches, and stumps that resulted from early summer storm damage.

The City of Lake Elmo and Washington County joined forces this summer to manage extensive tree and property damage that were the result of heavy storms in June and July. City clean-up crews spent more than seven weeks picking up brush from city neighborhoods.

Temporary brush collection sites were created at the Public Works facility on Ideal Avenue, and at the Lake Elmo Park Reserve. Beginning on August 22nd, the piles of brush were ground into chips and transported to District Energy in St. Paul. The chips will be burned and converted into energy used to heat and cool buildings in downtown St. Paul.

Between the two sites, it is estimated that more than 6,000 cubic yards were collected and chipped.



In late August, storm debris was ground into chips at both county and city collection sites. Pictured above is a screen shot from a stop motion video of the chipping occurring at the Public Works facility on Ideal Ave.

MNDNR Affirms New Lake Use Times; Modifies High Water Wake Creation Rule

After four months of review, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources has affirmed the City of Lake Elmo's Water Surface Ordinance that would expand hours of wake creating use on the Tri-Lakes from sunrise to sunset Monday through Friday and 9 am to sunset on the weekends. Lake Elmo wake creation hours would remain from noon to sunset seven days a week. In addition, the MnDNR concurred with Lake Elmo officials that the ordinance would place an immediate no wake restriction on all Tri-Lakes if the ordinary high water mark was exceeded and the restriction would remain for three days after the specific lake level would retreat below the ordinary high water mark. Lakes have now been posted to reflect the approval.

"It was fortuitous that this summer saw heavy rains and we were able to carefully observe the effect high water has on the Tri-Lakes, especially Olson Lake and Lake DeMont-

reville," said City Administrator Dean Zuleger. "City staff and three council members, including the Mayor, were able to observe for almost two months straight how use, wake, and high water affect the quiet enjoyment of the lake." Zuleger himself recorded more than 50 observations of lake use this summer, including the phenomenon of sunfish guppies flying out of the drainage weir.

City staff submitted field worksheets to MnDNR staff in late June and then observed two weeks of heavy rains and the impact of it on the Tri-Lakes system. During this period, City staff worked with the Valley Branch Watershed District to understand the hydraulics of the area lakes from Silver Lake to the St. Croix River.

"Ordinary high water mark on the Tri-Lakes is a sensitive issue and in some respects we are held hostage by the management of upstream lakes. The Council thought it best to amend the no wake restrictions to

manage not only our lakes but the inflow of water from the north," said Mayor Mike Pearson.

The summer of 2013 yielded a few important facts on lake use. First, the highest congestion co-efficient are early morning fisherman on Olson Lake and Lake DeMontreville. Second, early morning wake creation largely comes from riparian land owners wanting to enjoy their property. Third, enforcement will be key in making sure sensitive properties like the Catholic Retreat Center, are protected.

"Our voluminous observations lead us to the conclusion that outside congestion is not as significant an issue with wake creation as is the respect for your neighbors, especially on the Tri-Lakes. It is a tight knit community that really understands each other well and we hope that intimacy can be self-policing and allow everyone to enjoy a high quality of life," concluded Pearson.

Public Safety

Speeding Down in Lake Elmo

Washington County Sheriff Department

According to the Washington County Sheriff's Department speeding complaints and citations in Lake Elmo are down this year. Several contributing factors include the completion of I-694 road construction project, which generated a substantial increase of detour traffic through Lake Elmo. In fall of 2012, the City adopted a "zero tolerance" traffic enforcement policy for posted speed limits, which also had an impact on the decrease of traffic safety issues.

Area patrol officers would like to remind residents of the curfew hours in Lake Elmo. Youth younger than age 15 are to be home during the hours from 10 pm to 5 am, and teens between the ages of 15 and 18 are required to be home from midnight to 5 am.

One final public safety reminder is that all dogs need to be licensed through Lake Elmo City Hall. Licenses are valid for one calendar year; 2014 dog licenses will be available in November. To report a dog-at-large or any other safety concern, please call the Washington County dispatch at 651-439-9381.



Last year's "zero tolerance" traffic enforcement policy has had a positive impact on speed violations.

City Cracking Down on Code Violations

You may have noticed several Lake Elmo properties cleaning up their act this summer. That's thanks to the City cleaning up their code enforcement policy and sticking to it. In May the City Council passed Ordinance 08-075, adopting the 2006 International Property Maintenance Code, a common adoption in surrounding cities that provides minimum standards addressing public health, safety, and welfare as they relate to the use and maintenance of existing structures and premises.

"We adopted the code to standardize our process for dealing with nuisance properties," cites Mayor Mike Pearson. "By putting these standards into place we are protecting taxpayers' property values and creating a high quality of life for current and future residents."

In the past three months, approximately 150 site visits have been conducted by code enforcement staff, and 28 of the 42 properties deemed



Pictured at left, a Lake Elmo property prior to the adoption of the International Property Maintenance Code. Pictured above, a cleaner view of the same property, after an administrative citation was issued. The entire process took approximately three weeks.

non-compliant have been cleaned up. This includes the property at 9447 Stillwater Boulevard that has been reported for its rundown state numerous times since 2009. Over the course of one month, after the adoption of the new maintenance code, enough trash to fill 14 30-foot dumpsters has been removed from the site. Currently there are 14 active code enforcement cases in the City.

In addition to heightened focus on blighted properties, a Code Compliance section has been added to the City's website, which provides examples of common code violations, explains the administrative citation process, and provides a link to report violations anonymously. The page can be found at www.lakeelmo.org/code-enforcement.

Park Commission Holds Planning Retreat; Looks to the Future



The Lake Elmo Park Commission is deciding how best to improve City parks and plan for growth. Pictured above is Carriage Station Park.

Armed with a recently completed survey and more than \$900,000 of funds to allocate toward City parks and trails, the Lake Elmo Park Commission held its first annual retreat on September 28th to begin planning for the future.

The morning session, moderated by City Council Member and Park Liaison Mike Reeves, focused on the Park Commission's role of pro-

viding recreation and conservation opportunities for Lake Elmo residents. The Commission reviewed the results of the current survey, which generally indicated a need for more trail connectivity that would allow residents to get around between neighborhoods, parks, schools and the downtown area.

"Trails and paths ranked very high on the list of survey respondents, so we will spend time this year identifying the best places to use our resources to get this City connected. This will include searching out grant possibilities with our partners in Washington County and the Metropolitan Council," said Shane Weis, Chairman of the Park's Commission and member of the Trail Sub Committee.

In the afternoon session, the Com-

mission also looked at the hierarchy of parks in Lake Elmo, recognizing the special nature of Sunfish Lake Park as a flagship nature preserve, designating Reid Park, Tablyn Park, Pebble Park, DeMontreville Park, and the VFW – Lions Complex as community parks, and looked at the specific needs of neighborhood parks for serving young and old alike. First up in 2014 will be the completion of a neighborhood park plan that will serve the Sanctuary neighborhood.

"We want to make sure that when we are planning for additional parkland, we not only look at the neighborhood, but the community as a whole. The survey has helped us identify some gaps in our programming," said Park Commissioner David Steele.

Acti-Kare Providing Quality Care Services for Seniors

In 2009, Lake Elmo resident Juli Wall left her position as an insurance executive for Allianz (where she had worked for 20 years) in anticipation of the next step in her career. Wall was exploring new options in the insurance industry, but after countless lengthy interviews, none of the opportunities presented seemed like the right move. It wasn't until tragedy struck that Wall discovered her true calling.

In February 2010, Juli's husband, Brent, suffered a traumatic brain injury resulting from a snowmobile accident. Brent's accident placed him in the hospital for 30 days, five of which he depended on ventilator support, but the need for care did not end there. Upon his discharge from the hospital Juli became the caregiver for her husband over the next two years

"Brent's accident really put life into perspective for me," said Juli. "I realized what was truly important was spending time with my loved ones, and giving back to people."

Juli followed her heart and decided to leave the corporate world and focus her efforts on finding a career closer to home. She started by researching franchise opportunities, and came across Acti-Kare Responsive In-Home Care.



Acti-Kare franchise owner Juli Wall. The business moved into their new office space, located in the Prairie Ridge Office Park, in June.

"Acti-Kare didn't seem to be a typical franchise like others I had researched," mentioned Wall. "Also, after going through the care and recovery process with my husband, I became passionate about helping others going through similar things."

Wall opened her Acti-Kare franchise in 2012, with her business partner Jill Patersen. Patersen also felt strongly about the business, as her mother had Alzheimer's and the family was providing in-home care. The company moved into their office space this past June.

Acti-Kare joins several other in-home care businesses located in Lake Elmo including Always Best Care, and Brightstar St. Croix. However, Juli doesn't see competition being a

problem.

"We all have different specialties and coverage areas," she said.

Acti-Kare's focus is on seniors, offering services ranging from assisting with errands and providing companionship for seniors living independently, to providing personal care for individuals needing around-the-clock hospice care. Utilizing Juli's experience in the insurance industry Acti-Kare also provides long-term care advocacy services, another offering that differentiates the business from others in the industry.

"Our mission is to provide passion and commitment to the senior market," said Juli. "In many cases, care providers become an extension of your family. We are dedicated to our clients and treating them with grace, dignity and respect."

Connie Thompson found Acti-Kare through a referral service through elder care. "Juli is an angel from heaven," Thompson said. "We utilized Acti-Kare services for three weeks, while my father was in transitional care and then hospice. Their help made all the difference in the world."

Acti-Kare employs 35 people, all with 10 or more years of experience. They are located at 8997 Highway 5, in the Prairie Ridge Office Park, and can be reached at 651-493-1251.

Lake Elmo Firefighters Urge Residents to Burn Responsibly



Recreational fires can be an ideal accompaniment to the perfect crisp fall day. When starting or tending a fire, regardless of the size, consider the

conditions. Is it too windy to burn? Is it too dry to burn? Fires must be attended at all times and extinguished at the end of the day. Smoldering fires are illegal (statute 88.171 (10)). Leaf pile fires are not recreational fires, and are also illegal. To view more guidelines on recreational fires visit www.lakeelmo.org/recfires.

Also this fall, the Lake Elmo Fire Department will be conducting a training burn in the Lake Jane area on Monday evenings through October. The home that was donated to the department will provide firefighters with a unique training opportunity, handling a fire in an area without close access to a direct water source.

**JUNE, JULY, AUGUST
EMERGENCY CALL RESPONSE
Fire: 60, Rescue: 16, Medical: 76**

Lake Elmo Library Offers Extended Hours, Fall Programs

The Lake Elmo Public Library is pleased to announce extended hours of service that will be in place through the school year. New library hours are 10 am to 5 pm on Mondays and Wednesdays, 10 am to 8 pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and 10 am to 2 pm on Fridays and Saturdays. The library will be closed on major holidays.

There is a full schedule of special events planned at the library this fall. Visit <http://lakeelmo publiclibrary.org> to for more information about each of the following:

- Oktoberfest in Lake Elmo - Thursday, Oct. 3, 6 to 8 pm. Must be 21 years of age to attend. Register by Oct. 2, 651-773-4926.
- Zentangle Art Class - Saturday, Oct. 26, 10:30 am to noon. Fun and



relaxing enhanced doodling, taught by Dick Connor. Open to all ages.

- Trade Halloween Candy for a Book - November 1, 2, 4 & 5. Grade school children can exchange a quart-sized bag filled with candy for a book. Candy will be donated to the Armed Forces Service Center.
- Child Rearing Theories forum - Thursday, Nov. 14, 6:30 to 8 pm. Led by Child Psychologist, Dr. Thomson Davis.
- Before You Buy: Tablets and Smart Devices - Thursday, Nov. 21, 6:30 to 8 pm. Dan Fontana from MobileLink

Wireless will answer your questions before you heading out on Black Friday for technology deals.

- Chemistry in the Library - Saturday, Dec. 7, 10:30 am to noon. Activity stations throughout the library.
- Don't miss the following regularly scheduled activities at your local library!
- Preschool Story Time - Every Friday, 10:30 am.
- Café Philo - Every Wednesday, 10:15 to 11:45 am. A topical discussion forum. Regular attendance not required.
- East Metro Writers' Group - Every Monday, 8:30 am. Bring your writing project.
- Poetry at the Picnic Table - second Tuesday of every month, 6 to 8 pm.

Fall leaves impact summer water quality

Gone are the days of summer heading out to the beach to swim. Instead days are becoming shorter and the leaves will begin to fall. It is important to remember that the lakes and waters that we love to swim in during the summer are ours to protect all year round, and the actions we take in the fall have an impact on the health of our lakes and rivers in the summer.

Managing and disposing of leaves properly will help to improve your lawn, protect your street from flooding, and improve the health of nearby wetlands and waterways. Although leaves and grass clippings are natural, they contain high levels of phosphorus. When rain and melting snow carry yard waste off the street and into nearby lakes, rivers and streams, it causes algae to grow out of control. Just five bags of leaves and clippings can grow up to 500 pounds of smelly green algae! When you clean up and compost leaves, seeds, twigs and clippings

during the fall, you help to ensure that our favorite swimming holes and fishing ponds will stay clear and clean next summer.

Got a small yard? Rake and bag leaves from your yard and sidewalk. Dispose of the leaves by composting them in your yard or bagging them for curbside pick-up.

Got a big yard? Rake areas directly under trees and then use your mower to mulch the rest of the leaves into the grass. Mowing is less time intensive than raking and the shredded leaves act as a natural fertilizer for your lawn. Be sure to aim the blower away from the street and driveway or bag the mulch and compost it.

Got a street? Rake and bag the leaves and debris settled against the curb and in the street in front of your home, as well as any debris covering the nearest storm drain inlet.

Left in the street, leaves can clog storm drains and cause your street to flood. The leaves also contribute



Dispose of leaves properly this fall to protect local lakes and rivers.

phosphorus to nearby wetlands and waterways that storm drains connect to, which contributes to algae blooms during the summer.

Remember: Keep leaves and yard waste out of the regular garbage, and never dump them in wetlands or buffer areas – it's illegal!

Lake Elmo Sixth Graders Learn the Power of Civility

Lake Elmo sixth graders will learn the value of civility this year, through the Lake Elmo Speak Your Peace project.

A unique curriculum based off of a community-wide initiative launched last spring will inform students how to effectively handle conflict with others and encourage them to become active participants in their community. The nine tools of civility, which serve as the program's foundation, cover important communication and relational skills including active listening, using constructive language, showing respect,



seeking common ground, and taking responsibility.

“Creating a culture of civility requires the contributions of many, including our youngest citizens,” stated Kristina Sickman, sixth grade teacher at Lake Elmo Elementary. “The Speak Your Peace Program will equip sixth graders with the leadership skills to serve as solid role models for their younger peers, and provide them with the confidence to make the transition into junior high school.”

The sixth-grade program will include a visit with local officials at Lake Elmo City Hall, role-play and skill building exercises for each of the nine tools, and capstone projects presented by students.

For more information about the Speak Your Peace initiative, visit www.SpeakYourPeaceLakeElmo.org.

Environmental Process Reviews Gateway Corridor Choices, Investigates Issues

Proposed transit services in the Gateway Corridor between downtown St. Paul and Woodbury have moved into the next phase of development. The Federal Transit Administration's Draft Environmental Impact Statement process will provide a full discussion of the environmental impacts of constructing and operating the transit alternatives under consideration, bus rapid transit and light rail transit.

Part of the process includes reviewing decisions made in earlier phases, according to Washington County Commissioner Lisa Weik, chair of the Gateway Corridor Commission.

“It's normal during this phase to explore changes to the project based on more thorough review and community feedback,” Weik said.

For example, the Oakdale Station location will be reviewed. Results of the Alternatives Analysis identified a station location near I-694 and 4th Street North in Oakdale to provide access to the Oaks and Crossroads Business Parks. Since the study was concluded, the City of Oakdale has proposed shifting that station to the



east to be located near the current Guardian Angels Park and Ride.

The City of Oakdale proposed shifting the station because it provides access to residents and businesses north of I-94 from Oaks Business Park to Inwood Avenue, takes advantage of development potential along 4th Street and Inwood Avenue, and provides improved access to businesses and residents in Lake Elmo.

During the scoping phase held now into early 2014, the feasibility, costs, benefits, and potential impacts of this alignment will be compared to the costs and benefits of the alignment studied as part of the Alternatives Analysis. This 4th Street alignment was not evaluated in the Alternatives Analysis.

Also during the scoping phase, an East 7th Street/White Bear Avenue alignment will be re-evaluated

based on its feasibility, costs, benefits, and potential impacts. This alternative could be dismissed in scoping based on those findings, or if it is inconsistent with the purpose and need of the project.

The purpose of the DEIS is to inform decision-makers and the public of the social, economic and environmental impact of the proposed transit line from downtown St. Paul to Woodbury. Examples of impacts include wetlands, protected species of animals and plants, as well as impacts to people, such as minority populations and cultures.

The environmental impact work will take approximately two years. During that time, a transit mode will be selected, either light rail or bus rapid transit in a dedicated lane.

Learn more about the Draft EIS scoping process at www.TheGatewayCorridor.com. At the website, people can sign up for occasional e-newsletters which will provide notice of opportunities to attend public meetings and provide input on the proposals.



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Lake Elmo to Partake in Deer Mitigation Hunt in November *Eight Residents will be Chosen to Join the Hunt via Lottery*

In conjunction with Washington County, the City of Lake Elmo will be participating in a deer hunt this fall to mitigate overpopulation in Lake Elmo Park Reserve and Sunfish Lake Park.

In response to a high volume of resident complaints regarding deer damage to trees, shrubs, and plants in the area, a flyover was conducted by MnDNR to assess the situation. Results indicated a deer count of 43 per square acre in both the Lake Elmo Park Reserve and Sunfish Lake Park. A normal threshold ranges between 15 to 25 deer per square acre. Washington County has also reported an increase of deer road kills over previous years.

The City has participated in similar hunts in the past, yielding 24 deer in 1996, 7 deer in 1999, and 12 deer in 2005.

The special hunt will take place on November 9 and 10, 2013. Washington County will continue the hunt the following weekend. During the two-day hunt, park gates will be closed to the public. Notices will also be posted on park property two weeks in advance. This

will be a shot gun only hunt.

To accommodate the hunt, the City of Lake Elmo will conduct a lottery for residents wishing to participate. Eight hunters will be chosen at random. All hunters selected will also be required to attend a special training session at the Lake Elmo Park Reserve Nordic Center prior to the hunt (specific date yet to be released).

Interested parties must be hunter safety certified, and present a valid deer hunting license and proof of address at City Hall, no later than Friday, October 18, 2013, to be considered.

For more information, contact City Hall at 651-747-3900.

Neighbors Unite on National Night Out



Several Lake Elmo neighborhoods held gatherings on Night to Unite, an nationally celebrated event that occurs on the first Tuesday in August. Night to United originated as a means to raise drug and crime prevention awareness. The L.E.F.D. and local police offers attended the events and spoke to residents. Pictured above, two "firefighters in training" enjoying the rare opportunity to explore the inside of a Lake Elmo Fire Truck.

THE SOURCE

A publication of the City of Lake Elmo
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