



City of
St. Francis

NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2020 | VOL. 5, NO. 2

City COVID-19 Update

The City of St. Francis would like to thank everyone for their patience during this unprecedented time. Continue to submit your permits online (www.stfrancismn.org) if that works for you. Please call (763-753-2630) or email (city@stfrancismn.org) with questions.

For more health and safety information regarding Coronavirus (COVID-19), refer to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at www.cdc.gov.

Message from your Mayor

By the time this newsletter comes out, the State stay at home order will have been lifted. I know everyone wants to get out and enjoy the outdoors and go about their normal routines. I don't think anyone really knows what the norm is today with everything that is going on, so still be cautious and safe in your everyday activities.

The City parks are open, but I still recommend you follow the CDC (Centers for Disease Control) guidelines when using the playground equipment: using sanitizers as well as washing your hands afterwards.

I want to explain why the City decided not to proceed with the Hwy. 47 corridor change that the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) had planned. At the very beginning, MnDOT said that they would listen to our residents and businesses to redesign Hwy. 47. As it turns out, that is not what happened.

The City would like to see four stoplights rather than four roundabouts. We asked MnDOT to be flexible and compromise. Staff and city council were willing to agree to one roundabout at 229th Avenue, a permanent stoplight at Pederson Drive, a second stoplight at 233rd Avenue and a roundabout at Ambassador Boulevard NW. After all of the meetings the City, residents and businesses participated in, MnDOT now tells us that it will be four roundabouts or nothing.

Also, the City was first told that it would be covering the cost of the median

lighting and landscaping only. Since then that cost has increased from three to five times the original amount.

The City agrees with a median, a single lane going north and a single lane going south, longer turn lanes, lower speed limits whether school is in session or not, doing away with the passing lane and making the northbound/southbound lanes even in height at the 227th Avenue intersection.

This decision was made because the council and staff felt it was not in the best interest of our residents and businesses to pay a lot of money for something they did not want. Therefore, the council has requested a sit-down meeting with the commissioner of MnDOT to see if the two parties can come to a mutual agreement that will be more beneficial to our City.

The priorities of the City are:

1. Safety first.
2. Slower and smoother traffic flow.
3. Access to our businesses.
4. Design Hwy. 47 as our downtown business district.

Hwy. 47 is important to our City as Hwy. 65, Hwy. 169, 494 and 35W are to other cities. Even if this takes longer to achieve, the council and staff would rather see it benefit our City than be a detriment.

Be safe and enjoy your summer!

Regards,
Mayor Feldman

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Visit us on social media!



Message from Public Works

Jason Windingstad
DIRECTOR

As you may know, I started working for the City of St. Francis about a month ago.

I was excited to see how much emphasis and pride is placed on this community's collaboration



between departments. In my many years of experience in public works, this is very rare to find and I am fortunate to be part of this team.

I thought I would share some insight on my direction as I get the know how the City of St. Francis functions. My focus right now is to evaluate the current structure and operations of the Public Works Department. I also want to ensure we are prepared for our community's ever-changing future needs. I take great pride in having a proactive approach in the planning and operations of the Public Works Department. I would like to ensure we are keeping our facilities, equipment and infrastructure in the best condition possible at all times to give the best service possible to our residents.

I hope you will find that I am always open to feedback, ideas and having conversations about how to better our services to the community. Please feel free to contact me via phone or email at any time. My contact information is available on the City of St. Francis webpage at www.stfrancismn.org.

St. Francis Recycling

Well, 2020 is certainly becoming a year of change and new curve balls. With the new way of life and new standards, we are all trying to adapt and adjust. The recycling industry is always changing due to supply and demand. As people are finding themselves at home more, consumers are producing more recycling in their curbside recycle carts. For trash haulers, they are trying to keep up with the higher demand on the residential side. St. Francis recycle events have been delayed for now, but we have not forgotten. We are working with our vendors to provide homeowners ways to recycle items such as appliances and electronics. We encourage residents to keep using their curbside recycling carts. If you have the means to safely store large recycling in a clean way, please do so. Just a reminder, place your recyclables loosely in your recycling cart. Do not use plastic grocery bags for recycling. Plastic bags can be recycled only at drop-off sites or thrown with trash. Stay informed on recycle events at the City website under the recycling tab or fliers in your mailbox.



To vote early by mail

Visit the Minnesota Secretary of State (www.sos.state.mn.us/elections-voting/other-ways-to-vote/vote-early-by-mail) for instructions to apply or fill out the application.

To request an absentee ballot for the August primary and/or November general election, complete and return the

application to Anoka County Elections Department by mail, fax or email.

Anoka County Elections
2100 3rd Avenue, Suite W130
Anoka, MN 55303

Phone: 763-324-1300
Fax: 763-324-1160

Email: Elections@co.anoka.mn.us

Parks and Recreation

The sun is shining and the days are getting warmer! Now is the time to get outside and enjoy the outdoors. St. Francis playgrounds are open to use during park hours unless marked with caution tape. With our new way of life, we are all being aware of the risks of using public space and socializing. St. Francis doesn't have the means to sanitize the playgrounds in a timely fashion so as always, use playgrounds and public spaces at your own risk. To help prevent the spread of diseases, try to keep a distance of six feet from others. Sanitize your hands before and after visiting the playgrounds. If you don't feel comfortable using public playgrounds, another great way of spending time outdoors is using our trail system. Go explore a new part of town! Venture outside our town and discover new places. Find our parks and trails map at www.stfrancismn.org/parksrec; click on the parks map tab on the left side of the website.



Dogs

A friendly reminder to always pick up your dog waste while out and about. Let us keep our City's parks looking beautiful!

Know The Flow!

www.knowtheflow.us



Chlorides in wastewater

Public Works staff would like to remind residents to make sure their water softeners are operating efficiently. As many of you know, when the MPCA renewed our wastewater permit in 2015, we were given a chloride limit; this is where we need your assistance. The main cause of high chlorides in wastewater is from water softeners. When a water softener goes into regeneration mode, the salt water (chlorides) used to regenerate the softener is discharged into the City's wastewater system. High chloride levels can have a negative effect on the ecosystem of streams, rivers and lakes. The drinking water in St. Francis is around 13 grains per gallon. Adjusting your softeners accordingly will help in keeping chloride levels down.

2019 Water Consumer Consumption Report

The 2019 Consumer Consumption Report is now available at www.stfrancismn.org/publicworks/page/annual-water-reports

Please contact Public Works at 763-235-2300 if you have questions about St. Francis' drinking water. You can also ask for information about how you can take part in decisions that may affect water quality.

Minnesota's Stormwater Manual

The Minnesota Stormwater Manual:

- Serves as a valuable resource for professional stormwater managers
- Welcomes newcomers to the stormwater field
- Provides practical stormwater management practices
- Receives regular review and edits
- Exists due to continuing efforts of the Stormwater Steering Committee

Whether you're new to stormwater or you've been working in the field for years, you'll find the Minnesota Stormwater Manual wiki has what you're looking for. It offers quick ways to search for information, provide feedback to the MPCA and update the contents. You will find the latest in stormwater management, including BMPs, models and regulations. Find Minnesota's Stormwater Manual at the following website at https://stormwater.pca.state.mn.us/index.php/Main_Page

Clean, Drain, Dispose – It's the Law!

Most anglers and boaters follow Minnesota's Clean, Drain, Dispose laws to help prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species (AIS). You can help protect our valuable Minnesota waters by not transporting AIS to another waterbody.

Clean all aquatic plants, zebra mussels and other prohibited invasive species from watercraft, trailers and other water-related equipment before leaving any water access or shoreline.

- It is illegal to transport prohibited invasive species – including zebra mussels, dead or alive.

Drain water-related equipment (boat, ballast tanks, bait containers, motor) and drain bilge, live well and bait well by removing drain plugs before leaving any water access.

- Keep drain plugs out while transporting watercraft.

Dispose of unwanted bait, minnows, leeches and worms in the trash.

- It is illegal to release bait into a waterbody or release aquatic animals from one waterbody to another.
- It is illegal to release worms in the state; worms are not native to Minnesota.

- If you want to keep your live bait, you must drain all the lake or river water and refill the bait container with bottled or tap water.



Recommended Actions

To further decontaminate your watercraft or equipment, it's important to spray, rinse and dry everything before going into another waterbody. Do one or more of the following:

- Dry for at least five days.
- Spray with high pressure water.
- Rinse with very hot water. To reduce the risk of spreading zebra mussels, use water over 120°F and spray each area for at least two minutes or 140°F water for at least 10 seconds.

For additional information, visit mndnr.gov/ais.

Don't flush wipes

Did you know that flushable wipes are really not flushable? While marketing labels would lead us to believe otherwise, the truth is flushable or disposable wipes do not break down even after standing in water for days, weeks or months. Wipes clog pipes and pumps.

Always discard wipes in a garbage can. Do not flush your disposable wipes. Improper disposal of wipes and other household items is a common cause of sewer service line backups for homeowners and municipal systems. Little wipes can cause big issues, which are costly to fix.

We understand that there's probably an increased use of disinfecting and personal wipes. Despite what the labels may say or how they're advertised, they're not flushable and only cause problems in the wastewater collection system, primarily by plugging lift station pumps.

Do your part and toss wipes into the garbage can.



St. Francis Fire Department and COVID-19

In February, we all began hearing more and more about the Coronavirus, otherwise known as COVID-19, making its way across the globe. The St. Francis Fire Department staff began discussing plans should the virus have a widespread infection rate in the United

States and specifically in Minnesota. We inventoried supplies, made bulk supply purchases and put together contingency plans in the event our City was impacted. As the situation began to unfold across the state and eventually into Anoka County, we began to

implement operational changes to keep not only our staff, but our community as safe, healthy and informed as we could.

On March 19 the department implemented a temporary duty crew staffing model, where two firefighters would be on duty 24-hours a day. This has eliminated, to the greatest extent possible, the number of firefighters coming in for call and has limited the amount of “touches” both with patients and around the station itself. We instituted a “clean in, clean out” procedure for staff, routine equipment and station disinfection process and a standard operating guideline for staff on how to handle calls for service during this pandemic.

The police chief, fire chief, Public Works director and City administrator meet three times a week to process, plan and implement necessary changes as directed by state, county and CDC recommendations.

We have also suspended fire inspections, public education and in-person training for firefighters. The department has developed and implemented a Google Classroom for firefighters to obtain vital training materials and lessons.

Lastly, the support of the City Council, City leadership and the community has been incredible during this difficult time. For that, we cannot thank you enough!



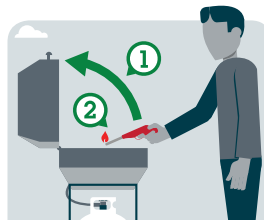
Stay fire safe this summer! Follow these grilling safety tips.



Only use your grill outside. Keep it at least 3 feet from siding, deck rails and eaves.



Keep a 3-foot safe zone around your grill. This will keep kids and pets safe.



Open your gas grill before lighting.



Keep an eye on your grill, fire pit or patio torches. Don't walk away from them when they are lit.



Clean your grill after each use. This will remove grease that can start a fire.



Place the coals from your grill in a metal can with a lid once they have cooled.

Stay fire safe this summer!
For more information and resources, visit www.usfa.fema.gov.



Click here to add image.



Start Seeing Motorcycles

The weather is starting to turn and that means it's time to share the road with everyone. The St. Francis Police Department would like to remind everyone to stay safe on the roadways this summer and “Start Seeing Motorcycles.” Please follow these safety tips from the Minnesota Office of Traffic Safety:

- Motorists are advised to watch carefully for motorcycles in traffic and always look twice before turning or changing lanes.

- Riders are advised to wear full, brightly-colored protective gear, including a DOT-approved helmet.
- Riders should travel at safe speeds, pay attention, maintain a two-second following distance and ride sober.
- Riders should seek safety training.



Rum River gets attention from local watershed organization, students

Jamie Schurbon

UPPER RUM RIVER WATERSHED MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION

The Rum River is one of six state wild, scenic and recreational rivers. Quaint and quiet along much of its length, the river is a recreational hot-spot for fishing and canoeing. Its waters, after they join with the Mississippi River, are also a drinking water source for the Twin Cities. This important river has a local entity, the Upper Rum River Watershed Management Organization (URRWMO) that cares for it.

The URRWMO has found partnerships with St. Francis High School science classes and the American Legion. Students have visited the river near the high school to inventory invertebrates (bugs, crawfish, snails, etc.) living in the river. They were accompanied by professionals from the Anoka Conservation District, who set the scientific protocols and used the resulting data. Because each invertebrate has a unique pollution tolerance and habitat requirement, students could calculate metrics of river health. They found the Rum River in northern Anoka County is in good health and has remained so over the years.

The program to combine education and data collection is ongoing, thanks to support from the American Legion. While over 1,000 high school students monitored the river's health from 2000 to 2015, the program's funding source faltered thereafter. The program shut down for three years. In 2019 the program was restarted, thanks to financial help from the American Legion. That year 40 students again entered the river with nets. The funding and work is planned to continue in 2020.

Leadership for this and other river stewardship is provided by the URRWMO. The URRWMO is a special purpose unit of government formed by the cities of Bethel, East Bethel, Ham Lake, Oak Grove, Nowthen and St. Francis. Its purpose is to manage the area's waters, particularly those that flow across City boundaries. For more information visit www.URRWMO.org.



Car Seat Safety Clinic

We are working on how to safely hold a car seat safety clinic in the near future. Please monitor the St. Francis Police Department's Facebook page and the City of St. Francis website for future dates.

Certified child passenger safety technicians will check for recalls and ensure all child restraints are installed by manufacturer specifications.

Each seat check typically takes 30 minutes (per seat, per car) and you will leave confident that you will be able to correctly install the seat and secure your child safely every time!

Please bring:

- Your child for proper fitting
- Your car seats and/or boosters
- Your car's manual (if available)
- Your child restraint device manual
- Your vehicle

Fireworks dos and dont's

The police understand the desire to show your patriotism through the use of fireworks. Please remember, consumer fireworks may not be used on public property (i.e. parks, roads, alleys, schools, government property, etc.). Purchasers of consumer fireworks must be at least 18 years old. Explosive and aerial fireworks are prohibited for public sale, possession and use. Prohibited fireworks include firecrackers, bottle rockets, missiles, roman candles, mortars and shells. There are several violations that can be enforced in regards to possessing or displaying unlawful fireworks. It is unlawful for any person to use or discharge legal fireworks between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m. in the City limits.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the St. Francis Police Department at 763-753-1264.

Anoka/Washington County Head Start—Early Head Start

The Anoka/Washington County Head Start-Early Head Start program is accepting applications for the 2020-21 program year. They serve eligible families with children from birth to five and pregnant women. A variety of options are available for families including part-day classes, full-day classes and partnerships with childcare providers. Classrooms are located in communities across Anoka and Washington Counties. For more information, please visit their website at www.accap.org/head-start/enrollment-4 or call the enrollment hotline at 763-783-4314.



What does a city assessor do?

Overview

The City of St. Francis assessors set the estimated market values and assign property classifications for property tax purposes for over 3,000 parcels every year. The goal is to ensure that the property tax burden is distributed fairly and equitably. The assessing process is based on Minnesota state laws; the process is guided and monitored by the Department of Revenue.

The assessment date is January 2 of each year. Annual sales studies are used to analyze market conditions to determine how the assessor's estimated market value compares to actual property sales. The Minnesota Department of Revenue requires the citywide median estimated market value to fall within a range of 90 to 105 percent of the median of actual property sale prices.

Duties of the City Assessors

- Set estimated market values for all properties every year.
- Assign or change classifications based on actual use of properties. Examples of classifications are residential homestead, residential non-homestead, agriculture, commercial, apartment building, etc. Each classification has a different tax rate and these rates are set by the state legislature.
- Physically inspect all properties within the city at least once every five years and update property data as necessary.
- Inspect and review properties for which permits were issued in the current year and any partial assessments from previous years and update property data as necessary.
- Process all Certificate of Real Estate

Quintile Review Map

Below to is a map of the residential quintile review areas that the Assessors will be working in from May through September 2020. This review is part of the process to determine January 2, 2021 property values, which are the values that will be used to assess property taxes payable in 2022.



Value documents (eCRVs). This includes check for accuracy, make corrections when necessary, analyze sales data and make determination if sale is included in or excluded from annual sales study.

- Analyze local sales data and determine the effect on the estimated market values. Increase or decrease values according to state guidelines
- Determine initial and continuing eligibility for special programs such as green acres, rural preserve, managed forestland, etc.
- Provide value and ownership information to residents, developers, real estate professionals, title companies and other interested parties
- Provide valuation research to city and county departments.

Property Taxes

Property taxes are used to fund local government and schools. A small amount goes to fund other taxing districts such as mosquito control and metro transit.

Appraisal and the "Quintile Review"

Each year, the city assessors must visit and review one fifth of the properties, so about 600, as required by state law.

What to expect if the assessor comes to your property:

The assessor, wearing an official identification badge, will come to the property and knock. An inside review of your home or business may or may not be needed. The decision is based on the information already on file. If an inside review is needed, it typically takes five to seven minutes for a residential home and longer for larger structures or multiple buildings. The assessor will walk around the outside of the property to verify exterior characteristics. Characteristics of the property that affect market value are age, square footage, quality of construction, condition,

basement finish, exterior extras such as decks, patios, other buildings, etc.

If no one is there when an assessor visits and an inside review is needed, an orange door hanger with instructions will be left.

What to do if you feel your property taxes are too high

If you feel your property tax rates are too high, you can attend budget hearings held each year in November or December. The time and place of the meetings will be listed on your Truth-in-Taxation Notice, sent by Anoka County in November. There are meetings for each of the taxing jurisdictions such as City of St. Francis, Anoka County, School District, etc.

What to do if you feel your property valuation or classification are incorrect:

Here are the steps to follows:

- Contact the assessor at the phone number listed on the valuation notice **or** see contacts below for phone numbers and emails and let them know your concerns.
- Attend the Appeal Open Book Meeting in early May (dates, times and locations will be listed on the valuation notice).
- Appeal to the County Board of Appeal in June. Call the phone number on the valuation notice to schedule an appointment to appear.
- Appeal to the Minnesota Tax Court on or before April 30 of the year the taxes are due. Visit the appeals court website for more information at <https://mn.gov/tax-court>

Contact Information

Primary contact:
Erik Skogquist, City Assessor
Phone: 763-412-1966 Ext. 701
Email: mnassessorerik@gmail.com

Secondary contact:
Mary Wells, City Assessor
Phone: 763-412-1966 Ext. 700
Email: mnassessormary@gmail.com

Seasonally for residential properties:
Chris Larson, Appraiser
Phone: 763-412-1966 Ext. 702
Email: mnassessorchris@gmail.com

For mobile homes contact:
Tedman Anderson, Anoka County
Phone: 763-324-1183
Email: tedman.anderson@co.anoka.mn.us



St. Francis Area Chamber of Commerce

PO Box 655
St. Francis, MN 55070

763-438-5163
chamber@stfrancischamber.org
www.stfrancischamber.org

The St. Francis Area Chamber of Commerce serves the needs of its membership in working toward the common goal of a growing, healthy business environment and community as a whole.

We wish to extend a Thank You to our community and businesses for supporting each other during these trying times.



We had 31 Entries in our Coloring the Community Chalk Contest! \$1,000 in awards were donated by the SFACOC, purchased from local businesses. Please check facebook.com/sfacoc for the winning entries!

Pioneer Days 2020 Cancelled

It's official...
Pioneer Days 2020
has been cancelled.



As much as we'd like to hold this event at another time this year... the right thing to do is cancel it. We are wishing our friends, family and community-- health, patience and strength during these times... stay tuned for additional opportunities to have fun and support each other.

stfrancischamber.org/pioneerdays

Chamber Members

Ace Solid Waste, Inc.
Advanced Automotive Care, Inc.
American Family Insurance - Mary Dresch Agency
Anoka Hennepin Credit Union
Anoka Ramsey Community College
Anytime Fitness
Barna, Guzy & Steffen, LTD
BTO Signs
Casey's General Store
City of St. Francis
Collision 2000
Connexus Energy
King's County Market
Crown Electric
Dairy Queen Orange Julius
Destination Academy, LLC
ECM Publishers, Inc.
Edward Jones Investments
Elaine M. Mustari, CPA, LLC
Freedom Strategy Group
Gold Star Kennels
Goodrich Pharmacy

Hakanson Anderson
Healthy Hangout
Hidden Haven Golf Club
Highland Money Management, Inc.
Kwik Trip
Lakeside Cabinets and Woodworking
Lee Carlson Center for Mental Health & Well-Being
Mansetti's Pizza and Pasta
McDonald's
Minuteman Press - Ham Lake
North Anoka County Emergency Foodshelf
Northland Screw Products
Northstar Outdoors
Opp Family Chiropractic, P.A.
Patriot Lanes Bar & Grill
Premier Specialties
RE/MAX Results~Michelle Anderson
ReMax Associates Plus, Larry D. Anderson
Rum River Tree Farm
Sara Sauer, CPA, LLC
St. Francis Area Schools
St. Francis Bottle Shop

St. Francis Collision & Glass
St. Francis Dental Care
St. Francis Fire Department
St. Francis Insurance Agency, Inc. - Gary Zimmerman
St. Francis Lions Club
St. Francis Physical Therapy
St. Francis True Value Hardware
St. Francis United Methodist Church
St. Francis Veterinary Clinic
Steve's Collision
Subway - St. Francis
T. Bryce & Associates, Inc.
TC Net-Works, Inc.
The Bridge Church
The Oaks of Lake George
The Ponds Golf Course & Restaurant
The Refuge Golf Club & Restaurant
TJ Associates - Advanced Graphic Solutions
Trinity Lutheran Church & School
Village Bank
Virtual Reality Arcade Corp

We support and encourage you to shop all of our local businesses.



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Events Calendar

Visit the City's website www.stfrancismn.org for calendar updates during COVID-19 restrictions.



Watering Ban

Due to high water use during the summer, the City of St. Francis will enforce an **odd-even** watering ban.

Odd addresses may water on odd days only. **Even** addresses may water on even days only. The day begins and ends at midnight. You may not sprinkle between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. Restrictions begin on May 1 and end on September 30.

New sod and seed are exempt for 30 days only. You **must** notify the Public Works Department at 763-233-5200, prior to sod/seed installation.

City Council Meetings

First and third Monday each month at 6:00 p.m.
(If a holiday, the meeting will be Tuesday.)

Planning Commission Meetings

Third Wednesday each month at 7:00 p.m.

Meetings are held at
St. Francis Area Schools District Office
4115 Ambassador Boulevard NW

Agendas and minutes online: www.stfrancismn.org

City Hall Location

23340 Cree Street NW
St. Francis, MN 55070

Hours	Monday-Thursday	7:00 a.m.-5:30 p.m.
Contact Us	City@stfrancismn.org	763-753-2630
Website	www.stfrancismn.org	

City Council

Mayor Steve Feldman	763-235-2310
Councilmember Sarah Udvig	763-235-2311
Councilmember Robert Bauer	763-235-2312
Councilmember Kevin Robinson	763-235-2313
Councilmember Joe Muehlbauer	763-235-2314

CALL BEFORE YOU DIG!

Gopher State One Call
Local: 651-454-0002
Toll Free: 1-800-252-1166
www.gopherstateonecall.org

