

Golden Valley 2006

CityNEWS

Civic Volunteerism: Your Community Needs YOU

Looking for opportunities to improve your community? Exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship? Connect with others who share similar goals, concerns, and feelings of stewardship? Do you just want to make a difference in the world? Consider sharing your time, energy, and skills at City Hall.

The City of Golden Valley encourages residents to get involved and help develop and enhance the city in which they live and work. Municipal volunteerism is one way citizens can connect with their city government and benefit the greater community.

Golden Valley's City Council continually seeks citizens to serve on the City's nine Advisory Boards and Commissions, which recommend policy and advise the Council on a variety of diverse issues (see list in sidebar on page 2). The numerous positions are filled with citizens willing to commit time and energy to making their community a better place. Volunteers include citizens across a wide range of age and economic groups. Besides the nine standing Boards and Commissions, the City occasionally has opportunities on short-term special interest advisory groups and task forces.

Potential Board or Commission members must be Golden Valley residents and must be able to commit between approximately four to 10 hours of their time each month. (Regular attendance is necessary, but like any commitment, it's understandable that people have important family or work responsibilities that may cause them to miss an occasional meeting.)

For more information or an application, visit the City Web site (www.ci.golden-valley.mn.us/citygovernment/boards.htm) or call Judy Nally at 763-593-3991.

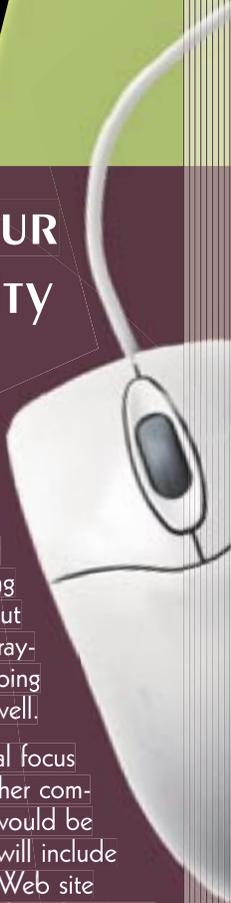


BOOT UP YOUR IDEAS ON CITY WEB SITE REDESIGN

If you live or work in Golden Valley and know what you like, then the City wants your ideas for updating the City Web site. Your input is extremely valuable in portraying the City's image and helping ensure the City serves you well.

The City will conduct several focus groups December 13 to gather community input. Each session would be one to two hours long and will include segments on aesthetics and Web site usability. Results will be used to determine a design and structure for an updated City Web site.

If you're interested in participating, please contact Pat Butler at 763-593-8002 (M-F, 8 am-4:30pm) or at pbutler@ci.golden-valley.mn.us to find out more about the process. She will help match you with available time slots.



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BOARDS/ COMMISSIONS APPLICATIONS

The City Council is seeking citizens interested in becoming more active in their city government by volunteering to serve on one of Golden Valley's Advisory Boards and Commissions.

Advisory Boards and Commissions recommend policy to the City Council and advise the Council on a variety of diverse issues (see list below).

Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA)

Meets monthly, fourth Tuesday, 7 pm.

Building Board of Review (BBR)

Meets monthly, first and third Mondays, 8 pm.

Civil Service Commission (CSC)

Meets annually and on call.

Environmental Commission (EC)

Meets monthly, fourth Monday, 7 pm.

Golden Valley Human Services Foundation (GVHSF)

Meets monthly, second Monday, 6:30 pm, and requires additional time commitment for planning and working at fund-raisers.

Human Rights Commission (HRC)

Meets monthly, second Thursday, 7 pm.

Northwest Hennepin Human Services Council Advisory Commission (NHHSCAC)

Meets monthly, third Thursday, 7 pm.

Open Space and Recreation Commission (OS&RC)

Meets monthly, fourth Monday, 7 pm.

Planning Commission (PC)

Meets monthly, second and fourth Mondays, 7 pm.

The City also has two other civic opportunities. The **Golden Valley Connection Project** Board of Directors meets monthly, fourth Thursday, 7 pm. The **Envision Bridge Builders** independently creates civic initiatives.

You must be a resident of Golden Valley to apply. Detailed information and applications are available on the City Web site (www.ci.golden-valley.mn.us/citygovernment/boards.htm) or by calling Judy Nally at 763-593-3991.

TNT Notices: In The Mail

Golden Valley property owners should be on the look-out for their 2007 Truth In Taxation (TNT) notices, which Hennepin County mailed November 10–24. The TNT notice outlines how property taxes are divided amongst the various taxing jurisdictions (including city, county, school, and other districts). This year's notice is higher than anticipated by the City Council when it set the maximum tax levy.

In its calculations, the City Council assumed the addition of property from the Valley Square Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district, which has been excluded from the general tax levy since 1979. Most of the district has been closed, allowing these parcels to contribute to the City's overall tax capacity. In September, Hennepin County had not processed the inclusion of these parcels. Once the parcels are made part of the City's general tax capacity, the City tax rate will be lowered from the 42.175 in the notice to 41.43 anticipated by the City Council (see table).

Hennepin County will not send out a revised TNT notice because this change also affects the value for Hennepin County, which would affect all notices. Under the revised formula, owners of a median Golden Valley home valued at \$277,608 will see a 3.9% increase on city taxes instead of 5.9%.

	2007 TNT Notice	2007 Actual Impact
Taxable Market Value (Average Home)	\$277,600	\$277,600
Tax Classification	x 1%	x 1%
Tax Capacity	= \$2,776	= \$2,776
City Tax Rate	x 42.175	x 41.43
City Tax	= \$1,171	= \$1,150
Pro-Rated Homestead Credit	- \$46	- \$46
Net City Tax	= \$1,125	= \$1,104
Percentage Increase From 2006	5.9%	3.9%

One of the City Council's roles is to help protect the value of your property investment, which is best translated to the price on the open real estate market. Projects like the Valley Square TIF district provide an economic benefit for the City and are important in making Golden Valley a place people want to live. This increases the value of homes in the community. TIF districts allow the City to "capture" revenue from the increase in tax capacity resulting from a new development to finance the costs of the improved development area. When the project is completed, the increase in value will lead to future City tax decreases for Golden Valley property owners.

See below for details about Golden Valley's TNT public hearing. If you have questions regarding the budget and/or tax levy, contact Finance Director Sue Virnig at 763-593-8010.

Truth In Taxation HEARING SET DECEMBER 4

Each November, homeowners receive a notice in the mail that outlines their proposed property tax for the coming year. Called the Truth In Taxation notice, it lists dates for the budget hearings of the various taxing jurisdictions (county, city, school district) so property owners can participate in the process and have their questions answered.

The City of Golden Valley's 2007 Truth in Taxation hearing will be held at 6:30 pm Monday, December 4, 2006, in the City Hall Council Chambers. At this hearing, the City Council will review the proposed budget and levy and take public input. Council may choose to reduce the proposed tax rate but may not increase it.

Details about the 2007 proposed budget and the City's budget process are available at www.ci.golden-valley.mn.us or in the September/October *CityNews*.



Comprehensive Plan Provides Blueprint For City

Communities evolve, and the best ones have a long-term plan to light the way. In city government the ultimate torch is the Comprehensive Plan, which provides a blueprint to guide development (private and public) and address changes likely to occur due to various social and market forces.

The Metropolitan Council requires all cities in the seven-county metro region to have such a plan, and state law requires cities to update their plans every 10 years. Golden Valley's revised Comprehensive Plan is due in 2008, and the City Council and staff have been gearing up by studying key areas and getting community input.

One such effort is *Envision Golden Valley*, a partnership between the City and its citizens to develop a vision for the community's future. The City Council has been using *Envision* results to set goals and priorities integral to updating the Comprehensive Plan. For example, one study focused on the I-394 corridor (from Hwy 100 to Winnetka Ave), and another focused on City parks and open space. Meanwhile, community members are using *Envision* results to pursue various citizen-led projects (see page 7).

In Minnesota, local governments (townships, cities, and counties) have primary authority for land-use planning and regulation. Under state law, the Met Council is responsible for guiding regional growth and development. Communities submit their Comprehensive Plans to the Met Council, which determines if the local plans conform to metropolitan system plans and are consistent with other adopted plans.

Golden Valley's Comprehensive Plan includes chapters on land use, transportation, wastewater, water supply, storm water management, housing, and parks and recreation. It was originally created through collaboration between the City Council, City staff, citizens, business owners, and various City Commissions. The completed Comprehensive Plan is managed by the City Council, which is required to consider its goals, policies, and programs when reviewing and setting City ordinances and policies. Copies can be viewed at City Hall and the Golden Valley Library.

If you have questions about Golden Valley's Comprehensive Plan, contact Planning Director Mark Grimes at 763-593-8097. 



Run The Valley T-SHIRT DESIGN CONTEST

The Golden Valley Human Services Foundation (GVHSF) is seeking colorful, eye-catching, and unique graphic design entries for its annual *Run The Valley* 5K/10K Walk/Run T-shirt contest. (Each race participant receives a T-shirt.)

There is no particular message to convey. The designer may choose content; however, the City of Golden Valley logo or the name "Golden Valley Human Services Foundation" must appear somewhere within the design. There are no size requirements for this. The GVHSF reserves the right to add these features to the design if not included. The use of humor is not required but perfectly acceptable.



The T-shirts will be white, all cotton, long sleeve. Printing will be three-color silk-screen (two colors are acceptable if the design is better suited to this format). There are no color requirements for the Golden Valley logo or Golden

Valley Human Services Foundation lettering. Submit design in camera-ready format for use by the printer (color separations preferred). The GVHSF will handle all printing. The designer may proof the printing, if desired.

The winning design is selected arbitrarily (no ranking system is used) by consensus of GVHSF members and possibly City staff. The selected printing company will be asked for input regarding the mechanics in printing particular designs. The winning designer (or designers, if co-designed) will be awarded 10 T-shirts after printing and be acknowledged in *Golden Valley CityNews* and the *Sun-Post* newspaper. GVHSF shall have sole ownership of the winning design and permission to reuse it when so desired.

The **deadline for entries is Friday, February 2, 2007**. Drop them off at Brookview Community Center, 200 Brookview Parkway, Golden Valley, MN 55426. 

DEER TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS HERD CONTROL

After spending nine months studying the status of the deer population in Golden Valley and taking comments from the public, the City's 10-person ad hoc Deer Task Force presented its report at the November 8, 2006 City Council meeting. Based on the number of deer in Golden Valley, the Task Force recommended herd management. The City Council approved a resolution to adopt a deer management plan.

The Deer Task Force was appointed by the City Council February 7, 2006 and included representatives from the City's Environmental Commission and Open Space and Recreation Commission as well as Golden Valley residents balanced geographically and with persons who favor and oppose herd management. If you have questions about the Deer Task Force, contact Park and Recreation Director Rick Jacobson at 763-512-2342. 



GREEN Gift Guide

Green gifts are useful and sustainable. Here are a few ideas to get you started.

For The Home

- House plant or gift card to a nursery
- Quilt or comforter
- Water-saving showerhead
- Compact fluorescent light bulbs
- Programmable thermostat
- Ceiling fan
- Reusable food storage containers
- Gift basket filled with non-toxic household cleaners
- Compost bin
- Bird feeder and seed
- Solar-powered gadgets

Practical And Useful

- Savings bonds or education IRAs
- Bus passes
- Co-op membership

For A Good Time

- Passes to National or State parks
- Ski pass to local ski hill
- Tickets to arts or sporting events
- Gift cards to restaurants or spas
- Gift cards for travel
- Gift cards that support a hobby (craft shop, photography class, kayak rental, etc)
- Books

To Help Out

- Camp fees for a kid in need
- Endangered animal adoptions
- Donations to a favored charity

'Tis The Season To Try To **USE-LESS** Stuff

Ahh, the holidays. A season for family, friends, fun, and a lot of waste. According to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, we throw away 25% more trash between Thanksgiving and New Year's than any other time of the year. If you want to reduce your impact on the environment during the holiday season, try these tips.

Gift-Ideas

Think long-lasting gifts, such as durable goods, to replace disposable ones. Some examples include cloth napkins, handkerchiefs, refillable pens, non-disposable razors, mugs, lunch boxes, canvas shopping bags, rechargeable batteries and charger, perpetual calendars, solar watches, plants and garden supplies, and bicycles, inline skates, or good walking shoes (to encourage alternative transportation).

Experiences are gifts that give throughout a lifetime, so spread them freely. Suggestions? Memberships, lessons, tickets, or gift certificates to restaurants, spas, museums, etc. For those people who seem to have everything, consider a donation in their name to a favored charity or cause. See the sidebar for a longer list of ideas.

Once you select a gift, don't be bedazzled by gift wrap. It can't be recycled like other papers, although it is reusable if in good condition. Consider alternatives such as bandanas, posters and maps, coloring pages, newspapers, fabric scraps, advertisements, or comic pages instead. Wrap a hat in a matching scarf, cookies in a jar, kitchen gifts in towels, etc. And gift bags. Those things nearly beg to be reused.

Holiday TREE

If you already own an artificial tree, great. Reuse it every year. If you are faithful to evergreens, a potted Norfolk pine, fig tree, or indoor plant may be an option. Be sure to get evergreens from a reputable place and not cut one down in the wild. (After the holidays, recycle the tree. Check with your garbage hauler for pick-up dates and costs.)

PACKAGING

Styrofoam recycling is expensive and not offered in this region, so consider packing gifts in dry, popped popcorn, biodegradable starch packing peanuts, or crumpled newspaper ads. (Note: Clean, unwanted packing peanuts are usually accepted by packaging stores for reuse.)

PARTIES

Gatherings are meant for celebration, not concentrated waste, so think reuseable. Forego disposable plates, glassware, and utensils and do the dishes together instead. Also, make sure to provide bins or bags clearly marked for recycling.

For more information about using less stuff, go to www.reduce.org or www.use-less-stuff.com.

Golden Valley Recycles



The Golden Valley Recycling Program is partially funded by the Hennepin County Board of Commissioners.

Holiday Schedule

<u>Holiday Week</u>	<u>Pick-Up Date</u>
Thanksgiving	Sat, Nov 25
Christmas	regular pick-up
New Year's '07	regular pick-up
Memorial Day '07	Sat, June 2
Fourth of July '07	Sat, July 7
Labor Day '07	Sat, Sept 8

Missed Pick-Ups

If your recycling is missed on Friday, call Waste Management at 952-890-1100 before noon on the following Monday.

If you have specific recycling questions, call 763-593-8030.

Take Action To Protect Water Quality

For years the idea of a perfect yard centered around turf, a shallow rooted plant that is hard to establish, demands chemical treatments and mowing, and is easily driven out by weeds. Well, the good news is that high-maintenance ideal is giving way to a more natural aesthetic (see sidebar) as homeowners embrace their role in protecting water quality.

Think of the curb as a shoreline or bank and the street as a stream. Your goal is to keep water away from the bank and out of the stream.



NEARLY ALL OF THE WATER THAT RUNS OFF LAWNS IN GOLDEN VALLEY WILL EVENTUALLY DRAIN INTO BASSETT CREEK, CARRYING WITH IT ANY POLLUTION GATHERED ALONG THE WAY.

WHEN FACTS COLLIDE

The conventional idea of a lawn is getting smashed between two facts, one old and one new. Old fact: Everyone lives in a watershed or an area where storm water run-off goes to the same place. In Golden Valley, nearly all the water run-off drains into Bassett Creek.

New Fact: Curb and gutter systems are becoming common in urban and suburban areas throughout the country as a way to provide better drainage and support pavement. In Golden Valley, curb and gutter is installed as part of the Pavement Management Program (PMP). See page 13 for more information on current PMP projects.

The conventional lawn, with its neatly mowed turf, allows water from rain or snow melt to roll smoothly over and through it and into the street, where the efficient curb and gutter system whisks it away to the storm water system. Water in the storm water system (separate from the sanitary sewer system) is not chemically treated before it is released into area waterways, so it carries with it all the pollutants it picks up along the way.

When these facts meet without any mediation, the result is more pollution in surface waterways and diminished water quality.

WHEN FACTS COOPERATE

Those facts need you to help them get along. You are the mediators. Water quality needs you. And you can help through landscape design that improves water infiltration, absorption, and filtration. Landscape choices should also:

- replace turf with native plants wherever possible
- change impervious surface to pervious surfaces to optimize on-site infiltration and absorption (eg, native plants with deep root systems)
- select plants suitable for your soil conditions to keep maintenance at a minimum
- mix plant species to provide diversity, increase survival rates, and add beauty through the seasons
- design dry areas around wet areas to reduce soil and nutrient loss

Landscaping or re-landscaping your conventional lawn can happen all at once or through the slow conversion of specific areas. See the sidebar for specific design tips and resources. The University of Minnesota also has a Minnesota Water Line (800-455-4526) to answer questions about erosion, lawn care, etc.

Call weekdays, 9 am—2 pm.

Landscaping FOR WATER QUALITY

The experts agree, one of the best ways to help water quality is to install a rain-water or water quality garden using native plants that are well-suited to the location.

Gardens should be placed in a sunken area or an area where water tends to run through quickly after a rain or during snow melt. A single garden can accommodate about five percent of the drainable area (eg, a 25-square-foot garden would accommodate 500 square feet of lawn).

Even with a low starting point, the location must be dug from six inches to four feet deep, depending on the type of soil and volume of run-off water to be dealt with. Because of this, do not place a rain garden over any utilities. Call GopherOne (651-454-0002) to have utilities marked before you begin such a project.

Also, since most areas of Golden Valley have clay or silty soils that are not very porous, it may be necessary to amend the soil or install an under drainage system before planting. If those steps are not taken, the garden will not infiltrate and will pond.

When the garden area is ready, plant hardy native wildflowers, grasses, and shrubs that can withstand both very wet conditions and intermittent drought-like conditions. Once established, your rain garden will require little maintenance, and you can sit back and enjoy the wildlife that visits.

For a free comprehensive manual covering site selection, plant selection, and maintenance, visit the University of Wisconsin Extension Service Web site at http://clean-water.uwex.edu/pubs/pdf/home_rgmanual.pdf.

The University of Minnesota (UMN) also has a great Web site (www.sustland.umn.edu) entitled SULIS (Sustainable Urban Landscape Information Series).

The site offers detailed information on landscape design, plant selection, implementation, and maintenance.



Recreation OPPORTUNITIES

Find details on the following recreation opportunities in the Fall Recreation Activities Brochure or the City Web site.

YOUTH ACTIVITIES

Youth Basketball—Boys and girls grades 2–6. Volunteer coaches are necessary for the success of the program. See the City Web site or the Fall Recreation Activities Brochure for details. Register by Dec 14.

Mailbox to the North Pole—Use Brookview's special Direct-to-the-North Pole mailbox through Dec 15. Santa requests that each letter include a full name and address so he can reply.

Supper with Santa (ages 2 and up, must be accompanied by an adult)—Spend a special evening with pizza, a fun-filled holiday show, and a visit from Santa Claus! Dec 1, 6–7:30 pm, Brookview Community Center. \$10/child, \$5/adult for dinner; free for children under age 2.

DAVIS COMMUNITY CENTER

Shoot Some Buckets (ages 7+ with adult)—Through Dec 21: Sun, 1–3 pm; Mon/Thurs, 6–8 pm; Sat, 10 am–noon.

Teen Open Basketball (ages 13-18)—Through Dec 21: Fri, 6–9 pm. \$15 for 10-time punch pass or \$2/person at door.

Adult Drop-in Gyms

\$20 for 10-time punch pass or \$3/person at door.

Over 40 Basketball—Mon, 8–10 pm

Open Basketball—Wed, 8–10 pm; Sat 8–10 am

Co-Rec Volleyball—Tues/Thurs, 8–10 pm; Sun, 3–5 pm

Register in person, by mail, phone, fax (763-512-2344), or online (www.ci.golden-valley.mn.us/econnect/).

For more information, contact:
Park & Recreation
Brookview Community Center
 200 Brookview Parkway
 Golden Valley, MN 55426
 763-512-2345
 Monday–Friday, 8 am–5 pm

Gliding Is Good On Golden Valley Rinks

Whether you're a hockey player, speed skater, figure skater, recreational skater, or can barely stand on a slick surface, go no farther in your quest for good ice. Golden Valley's skating rinks have a great reputation, held up by the City's Park Maintenance crews who keep the rinks in top shape.

Crews start evaluating the skating rinks and level the surfaces in early fall. They put up freshly painted hockey rink boards (courtesy of summer seasonal staff) in October. According to crew leader Bob Strandquist, it takes a three-person crew an entire day to set up the boards on one of Golden Valley's six hockey rinks. The City also has 10 additional recreational ice rinks. On some rinks, crews also install hand railings and matting between shelters and rinks, put up fences on sliding hills, inspect skating lights, and prepare hockey and broomball nets.

Filling those rinks with ice and maintaining them isn't always easy. To start making ice, the crew needs temperatures to be around 0° to -10°F for a week or so and about four inches of frozen ground. The goal is to establish a six-inch ice base, which will help rinks survive most warm snaps. After that, crews build "finish ice," with the goal of having rinks ready by mid-December and winter school breaks.

Depending on weather conditions, rinks are cleaned and resurfaced Monday through Friday and cleaned Saturday mornings. Double-bladed shovels may be checked out at shelter buildings. During extreme cold or warm weather, rinks and shelter buildings may be closed. Check by calling 763-512-2350 before dropping children off. "Closed" signs are also posted on park shelter doors.

If you have concerns or questions about ice conditions or rink maintenance, call Park Maintenance at 763-593-8045.



Schedule

Rinks open December 16 and close February 19 (weather permitting).

Monday–Friday: 4–9 pm

Saturday: 10 am–9 pm

Sunday: 1–9 pm

Holidays

Christmas Eve: noon–4 pm

Christmas Day: closed

New Year's Eve: noon–7 pm

New Year's Eve Skating Special:

Scheid Park will remain open until 10 pm for families to enjoy winter fun activities. Hot chocolate will be provided.

Martin Luther King Day: 10 am–9 pm

Presidents' Day: 10 am–9 pm

Other school holidays: noon–9 pm

LOCATIONS

Golden Valley's Park and Recreation Department (763-512-2345) maintains skating areas at the following parks:



Gearty	3101 Regent Ave N	H	GS	W
Hampshire	1601 Louisiana	H	GS	W
Lakeview	9300 Olympia		GS	W
Lions	7200 Harold Ave	H	GS	W
Medley	2355 Ensign Ave	H	GS	W
Scheid	1965 Toledo	H	GS	W
Wesley	8305 Wesley	H	GS	W
North Tyrol	4300 Sunset Ridge		S	
South Tyrol	Tyrol & Ortley Pass		S	
Yosemite	Woodstock & Yosemite		S	

H=Hockey rink W=Supervised warming shelter
 GS=General skating rink S=Secondary skating area

All Brookview's A Stage

A new look for Golden Valley's outdoor concerts? A local citizens' group hopes so. Two years ago, 100 members of the Golden Valley Federated Women's Club did an *Envision-In-A-Box* session to brainstorm their vision for Golden Valley's future. The results called for "more family things, more music, more art," so the group decided to drum up community support to build an outdoor performance area at Brookview Park.



WOMEN'S CLUB MEMBERS DIANE NIMMER, JOANNE BURKHOLDER, AND SHARON JANZEN

"What really came out was community connections and how could we create more," says Women's Club member Diane Nimmer. "We'd always donated to the City's concert in the park series. We looked around to see who else was involved."

They found that the Golden Valley Rotary Club had been interested in partnering with the City to build a performance area at Brookview Park, and that the City was unable to fund it without raising taxes. The Women's Club stepped in and took on the project from a grass-roots level. "This is precisely what *Envision Golden Valley* was intended to inspire," says Mayor Linda Loomis. "The City can't realistically fill every community desire, and when a citizen-led visioning process pinpoints a niche to fill, the citizens should jump in and fill it."

As part of an ad hoc task force, the Women's Club worked with City commissions and the Rotary to develop a design concept and site location (see below). With the initial work completed, the next step is a fund-raising feasibility study. "We have a start on funding, now we need a coalition of community members willing to join the partnership," explain Women's Club members Sharon Janzen and Joanne Burkholder.

"It would be totally community driven and paid for through donated funds," Janzen adds, "so we need to identify people who could participate. We need everything from leadership and grant-writing to help stuffing envelopes." The group also welcomes community suggestions about names and potential grant resources.

The Women's Club hopes to see the performance area built by 2008. "We'd like to alter the community and create a legacy for generations to come, so others could build on it," says Nimmer.

For more information or to support the effort, contact Diane Nimmer at 763-529-7662 (home), 763-242-1067 (mobile), or diane@nimmerfamily.com.

Fund-raisers Needed

Work with an energetic, enthusiastic group of citizens to help improve your community. Golden Valley's Outdoor Performance Area Task Force is looking for volunteers to establish a fund-raising plan to raise money to build an outdoor performance area at Brookview Park. Interested? Contact Diane Nimmer (see main article for information).

SENIOR Stuff

Most activities are at Brookview Community Center and require advance registration.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Holiday Concert with the Golden Valley Orchestra—Dec 11, Brookview. Refreshments at 6:30 pm, concert at 7 pm. Donations accepted. Five Cities Transportation available by calling 763-531-1259.

Mary Wanderer's Travel Show—Jan 22, 1–3 pm. Review the trips planned for 2007. Pie and coffee will be served. \$4. Register by January 17.

CLASSES

The mind is a terrible thing to waste. Join us this winter for:

- Bridge—Fridays starting Jan 19
- Defensive Driving 4-Hour Refresher—Dec 14 and Jan 11, 9 am–1 pm.
- Painting—Six-week session begins Dec 4, 9:30–11:30 am.

MEDICARE PART D AND HEALTH INSURANCE HELP

Dec 12 and Jan 9 at 9, 10, and 11 am. Get help with health insurance and Medicare forms and information about

Medicare supplemental, long-term care insurance, and Medicare Part D. Call for an appointment.

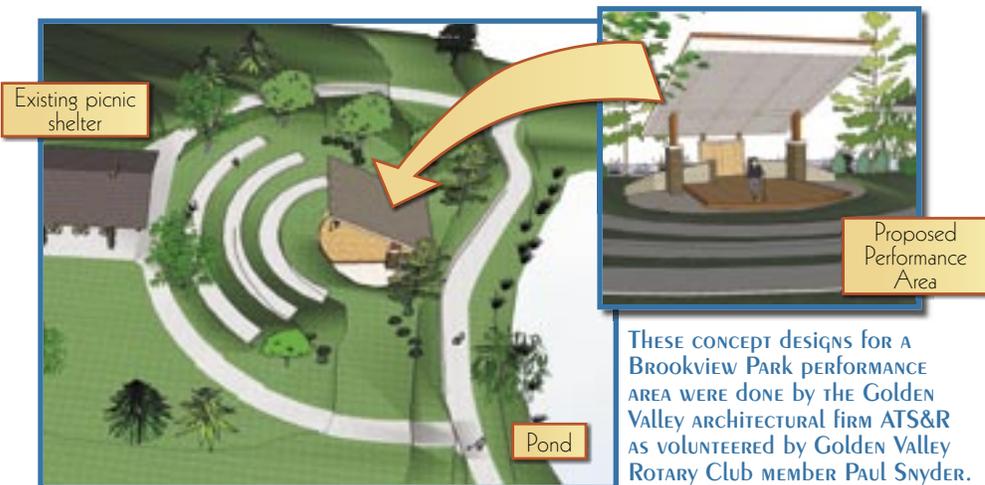
UPCOMING TRIPS (REGISTER EARLY)

Dec 29: Jim Brandenburg's "Touch the Sky: Prairie Photographs," Bell Museum, 9:30 am–2 pm. \$8/person includes bus and exhibit. Register by Dec 15.

Jan 30: "Grease," Chanhassen Dinner Theater, 10:30 am–5 pm. \$58/person includes lunch, reserved theater seating, transportation, and escort. Register by Dec 22.

For more information or to register, contact:

Golden Valley Seniors Program
 Brookview Community Center
 200 Brookview Parkway
 Golden Valley, MN 55426
 763-512-2339
 8 am–5 pm, Monday–Friday



THESE CONCEPT DESIGNS FOR A BROOKVIEW PARK PERFORMANCE AREA WERE DONE BY THE GOLDEN VALLEY ARCHITECTURAL FIRM ATS&R AS VOLUNTEERED BY GOLDEN VALLEY ROTARY CLUB MEMBER PAUL SNYDER.

Managing Winter Weather: A Midwestern Snow Story

Minnesota's location in America's "Snowbelt," which stretches across the Great Lakes from Minnesota to Maine, means it gets more than its fair share of winter storms. It also means Minnesota cities must plan for and deal with the results of those storms, especially because cities need dependable transit if they are to function smoothly. Over the years, cities have developed ways to deal with the worst Mother Nature can dish out.

SNOWBELT CITIZENS ADAPT

Snowbelt storms are often more severe than in other parts of the country, pairing deep snow with driving winds and freezing temperatures. Colonial city-dwellers learned quickly to stockpile firewood and other supplies in case winter storms hindered transportation and deliveries for weeks on end.

As populations grew so did problems caused by winter weather and, in the American way, citizens adapted. They equipped carts

and carriages with ski-like runners for winter, and they even began venturing out for fun to enjoy sleigh rides on the snow and ice. According to the National Snow and Ice Data Center (NSIDC) at the University of Colorado-Boulder, snow plows were first patented in the 1840s, and Milwaukee was one of the first cities to record using one in 1862. It was attached to a cart pulled by a team of horses.

While snow plowing helped cities recover more rapidly from storms, it also introduced other problems. Plowing the main streets left huge piles of snow blocking side roads and sidewalks. Citizens complained and even brought lawsuits against plowing companies because of inaccessible businesses, obstructed sidewalks, and rutted streets that made sleigh driving difficult. A few cities used salt, but people complained that it ruined the streets for sleighing and damaged shoes and clothing. All this conflict created a need for cities to take responsibility for organized snow removal. Some cities hired shovelers and horse-drawn carts to haul away plowed snow and dump it into rivers. They also used sand instead of salt on streets and bridges.

MOTORIZATION: BOON AND BANE

Cities began motorizing their snow removal fleets around 1913, says NSIDC, and they justified purchase and maintenance costs by comparing it with the amount of community revenue lost if streets weren't cleared. Meanwhile, the growing popularity of automobiles created a whole new set of challenges for snow removal crews. With more than 17 million cars on the streets by 1925, there was an increased demand for dry, safe streets and snow removal efforts even for snowfalls less than four inches. Car crashes were rising on both main thoroughfares and residential streets. To manage the ice left behind by snow plowing, cities used salt by the ton and experimented with cinders and sand.

Snow removal crews also faced problems caused by parked and abandoned

vehicles. Going around them buried the vehicles in huge drifts, forcing owners to dig them out. To resolve the problem, cities passed ordinances banning overnight parking in certain areas or posting signs marking snow plow routes and banning parking when plows were in use. Golden Valley's snow removal policies are outlined on page 12.

THE SNOW REMOVAL BALANCING ACT

Societal changes continue to affect snow removal efforts. "Life moves fast, and there's an expectation that everything is instant," says Tom Klatt, Golden Valley Public Works Maintenance Manager. "But we have to consider the greater community. Today snow removal is all about balancing expectations, reality, economics, and environmental concerns."

Klatt says the first priority is keeping roads safe for driving, and to some people "safe" means bare pavement. When major snowstorms are in the forecast, Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) crews pre-wet the freeways with chemicals to enable snow removal to bare pavement. That approach isn't economically or environmentally feasible on residential streets or sidewalks, Klatt explains. For example, local residential streets carry around 1,000 vehicles a day traveling at around 30 miles per hour (mph), while local freeways carry around 150,000 vehicles a day traveling at 55 mph or faster.

"Golden Valley does not have a bare pavement policy* because we maintain local streets, and traffic volumes and speeds don't warrant it," says Public Works Director Jeannine Clancy. "We also have concerns about environmental impacts [of chemicals] on surface water. However, other jurisdictions that manage streets with higher volumes and faster speeds need a bare pavement policy to protect the safety of the traveling public."

The City of Golden Valley has just one snow plowing crew, but operations are tuned in 24/7, and staff works tirelessly to provide the best possible service, says Klatt (see "Diary Of A Snow Plow Driver," below). Because collector streets (eg, Noble Ave, Golden

Valley Rd, etc) carry more traffic, they are considered priority areas and are plowed and sanded first. State and County roads (eg, Hwy 55, Winnetka Ave, etc) are maintained by those organizations, not by the City.

On the economic side, snow removal represents a big chunk of a city budget. Besides plowing and salting, cities also have to haul the snow away since it may not melt rapidly enough. Using salt increases costs financially and environmentally. Experts discovered in the late 1960s that salt corroded cars, damaged roadside plant life, polluted water supplies (including drinking water), and killed fish in streams. It is also corrosive to roads and bridges. In reality, use of salt is necessary to maintain safe roadways, but when used judiciously, impacts to the environment can be minimized.

WE'RE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER

Efficient, effective snow removal also requires cooperation from the public, says Klatt. Here are a few suggestions:

- Listen to weather forecasts so you're not in transit when a storm hits. The resulting traffic jams make plowing difficult. Plan ahead and choose alternate routes when necessary.
- Remember, speed limits are set for ideal driving conditions. In congested city traffic, careless drivers increase hazards for everyone, especially during inclement weather.
- Don't put snow from private property onto City streets or sidewalks, and remind private contractors to follow suit.
- Keep garbage and recycling containers off roadways and sidewalks.
- Slow down for a day or so after a snow or ice event. After all, it is winter in Minnesota and we all have to deal with it.

For more information about snow removal in Golden Valley, go to www.ci.golden-valley.mn.us/streets/winterstreets.htm or contact Public Works Street Maintenance at 763-593-8081.

*Golden Valley has a bare pavement policy on one street—Winnetka Ave between Hwy 55 and I-394. It was formerly a County road, and when the City became responsible for it in 2002 it wanted to maintain it at previous levels.

Diary Of A Snow Plow Driver

Monday/Tuesday - Snow began late morning. Was dispatched with four other trucks to put down salt/sand on key roadways. Stayed out all afternoon with other trucks to keep streets passable through the rush hour. Snow stopped at 9 pm—just three inches. Was called in again at midnight to plow all streets curb to curb. Things went well and finished by 8 am. Saw sidewalk crews out at 4 am getting priority walks opened for pedestrians. Crews spent rest of day clearing sidewalks and de-icing as necessary.

Wednesday/Thursday - Snow began at 6 pm and dropped four inches by 3 am. Began plowing by 4 am. Traffic picks up and slows down plowing efforts, so don't finish until 2 pm. Saw sidewalk crews out at 4 am again, getting things ready for morning use. Crews spent rest of day and next day clearing sidewalks and de-icing.

Saturday/Sunday - An inch of snow falls late Friday/early Saturday. Was dispatched at 5 am

Saturday to salt/sand priority areas. Another two inches falls Sunday afternoon. Public Safety Department confers with supervisors, and they call in crews to do any de-icing needed to assure safe driving conditions. Called back in at midnight to do city-wide plowing of streets and sidewalks until all were opened.

Tuesday/Wednesday - Snow started at 6 am. Forecast says expect six to 10 inches in the next 24 hours. Sent out to de-ice as needed. Five inches on the ground by 1 pm and more expected. Crews began plowing to assure all roads are opened so residents can get home and Public Safety vehicles can get through. Finished plowing by 9 pm. Four more inches fall by 2 am (for a total of nine). Called back in at 4 am to plow all streets again. Finished plowing by noon. De-iced until all roadways were in reasonable winter driving condition. Sidewalk crews on the job as usual.



911 & CELL PHONES

Each year more than 150 million 911 calls are placed by people using wireless (cell) phones, three times more than in 1995. The ability to call 911 for help in an emergency is one of the main reasons many people own a cell phone. To be effective, callers need to know how to properly use cell phones and what information dispatchers need in an emergency.

Because cell phones are mobile, they are not associated with a fixed location or address. A caller using a cell phone could be anywhere. The location of the cell tower transmitting a 911 call may provide a very general indication of the caller's location, but that information is usually not specific enough for rescue personnel to deliver assistance quickly. That's why it's important for people calling 911 from cell phones to remember the following:

- Try to stay calm and speak slowly.
- Tell the dispatcher the location of the emergency right away. Pay attention to details such as addresses, business names, intersections, street names, mile markers or exit numbers if on the highway, and direction of travel.
- Give the dispatcher your cell phone number so he/she can call you back if the call gets disconnected.
- Stay on the line until the dispatcher tells you to hang up.
- Don't place yourself in danger—stay near the emergency scene only if it is safe.
- If your cell phone is not "initialized" (ie, you do not have a contract for service with a wireless service provider) and your emergency call gets disconnected, you must call the dispatcher back because he or she does not have your telephone number and cannot contact you.

For more information about cell phones and 911, contact the Golden Valley Crime Prevention Unit at 763-593-8058. 

Call Whenever You Need Help

Where's a cop when you really need one? Waiting to respond to your 911 call.

When you need the response of police, fire, or medical personnel, the Golden Valley Police Department (GVPD) wants you to call 911. ***It does not have to be an emergency.*** Dispatchers at the 911 call center will ask you a few questions to help determine the type of assistance and where it is needed.

911 SERVICE TYPES

Basic 911 calls go to a dispatcher in the local public safety answering point (PSAP) or 911 call center. The emergency and its location are communicated by voice (or TTY) between the caller and the call taker.

Enhanced 911 calls are routed to the proper PSAP for the caller's location, where equipment and database information display the caller's phone number and address. (The term "enhanced 911" is not synonymous with wireless 911.) The City of Golden Valley shares an enhanced system dispatch center with the City of St Louis Park.

911 Calls Through VoIP (Voice-over Internet Protocol) is growing rapidly for both business and residential use. Methods to bring 911 calls into Enhanced 911 systems have recently become available. Estimates are that 12–15 million households will be using a VoIP service as either a primary or secondary line by the end of 2008.

WHEN TO CALL 911

You can call 911 to report medical emergencies, a crime (past or in progress), fire, or a suspicious person or activity. Please remember to stay calm and explain your problem to the dispatcher. If possible, provide as many details as you can, such as the suspect's description, license plate number, direction of travel, etc. Stay on the line until the dispatcher hangs up or assistance arrives.

If your call does not require the response of a police officer to your location, please call the GVPD at 763-593-8079. This number is answered by public safety personnel 24 hours a day. For example, call this number to ask questions about impounded vehicles, speak with an officer or have one return your call, speak with a detective about your case, or ask questions about City ordinances.

ACCIDENTAL CALLS TO 911

If you accidentally call 911, do not hang up without talking to the dispatcher. Explain that you misdialed and didn't mean to call 911. If you hang up without talking to the dispatcher, he or she will call you back. If the dispatcher gets a busy signal, voice mail, or no answer, he or she will send police officers to verify that everything is all right.

QUESTIONS?

If you have questions about 911, contact the GVPD at 763-593-8079. 

Help is only a phone call away.



Facts

- The FCC estimates there are **200 million** 911 calls each year in the US, and one-third of those are wireless.
- Basic 911 service is available to **99%** of the population and **96%** of counties and parishes.
- Enhanced 911 service is available to **93%** of the population.

Give The Gift Of Safety This Holiday Season

Gift giving season is just around the corner, and safety gifts are always in vogue. As usual, the Golden Valley Fire Department (GVFD) is ready with its annual recommendations. Here are a few to consider.

LIGHT SENSORS that automatically turn outdoor lights on when it's dark make a great safety gift and are easy to install. Price: \$8 and up.

WEATHER ALERT RADIOS can help keep loved ones safe during inclement weather. Consider one that activates during an emergency weather forecast to provide important information. For extra protection, consider hand-crank models that don't need batteries or electricity to operate. These are particularly appreciated by boaters and campers. Price: \$19.95 and up.

HAND-CRANK PORTABLE AM/FM RADIOS don't need batteries or electricity to operate. Some include a flashlight and cell-phone charger. Price: \$19.95 and up.

DIGITAL DASHBOARD COMPASS/WAYFINDER will keep drivers on course and help them navigate unfamiliar roads or waters. Some are dash-mounted but can be removed and used while walking. Price: about \$25 and up.

PORTABLE JUMP STARTERS can charge a car battery in minutes. They are also a power source for cell phones, laptops, and other electronic devices. Price: about \$40 and up.

HAZARDOUS ENVIRONMENT DETECTORS can help keep a home safe by monitoring for carbon monoxide, radon, combustible gas, formaldehyde (allergy), or asthma chemical triggers. At the minimum, the GVFD recommends installing one carbon monoxide detector on every level of the home away from sources of carbon monoxide (see sidebar). Price: \$40 and up.

CPR (CARDIOPULMONARY RESUSCITATION) TRAINING is recommended for at least one person in every household. The Minneapolis Red Cross Chapter (www.mplsredcross.org or 612-871-7676) offers CPR and other safety classes close to Golden Valley. Price: about \$50.

RECHARGEABLE TWO-WAY RADIOS (WALKIE-TALKIES) provide free, clear communications with contacts up to 10 miles away. They also include a variety of channels for local weather and other broadcasts. Price: \$60 and up.

HIDDEN SECURITY CAMCORDER CLOCKS look like LCD clocks but are actually motion-activated security cameras that record what really happens in your absence. Price: \$180 and up.

PORTABLE GPS NAVIGATION SYSTEMS feature detailed maps, spoken directions, and visual instructions. Some include hands-free calling tools and MP3 connections. Price: \$500 and up.

OTHER SAFETY GIFT IDEAS include bike helmets, fire extinguishers, smoke detectors, rechargeable flashlights, escape ladders, power strips, personal flotation devices (life jackets), swimming lessons, self-defense classes, defensive driving classes, and more. For more information, check with local stores, community education offerings, or the GVFD (763-593-3977).



LAW REQUIRES CO DETECTORS

Carbon monoxide (CO) is an invisible, odorless gas that can build up in homes with malfunctioning furnaces, fireplaces, wood burning stoves, or water heaters.

In the United States, about 500 people die each year from CO poisoning, and another 10,000 need medical attention.

In June 2006, Minnesota enacted a law requiring that CO detectors be installed within 10 feet of each bedroom in all Minnesota homes. All new homes and apartments will be built to that standard starting January 1, 2007. Owners of existing homes must comply by August 2008; owners of existing apartments must comply by August 2009.

Eight other states have passed similar legislation. Safety advocates say the new law could save 100 lives a year in Minnesota.

Most CO detectors cost between \$20 and \$40.

For more information about CO detectors, contact Fire Education Specialist Sarah Larson at 763-593-3977.

Adopt Your Neighborhood Fire Hydrant

Looking for a convenient way to be active in the well-being of your community? Consider grabbing a shovel.

The Golden Valley Fire Department is seeking help to keep the fire hydrants in your neighborhood clear of snow. A six-foot clear space around the circumference of the hydrant will help reduce the time it takes firefighters to hook up hoses if a fire occurs in your neighborhood. The best time to shovel out a hydrant is after the streets are plowed, before snow accumulates and freezes.

Golden Valley Community Pride, a local organization that works to beautify the city by mowing public rights-of-way and planting flowers there in the summer, has adopted fire hydrant shoveling as its winter project. If you want to help, call Don Brown, citizen volunteer, at 763-545-9518.



WINTER PARKING & OTHER Snowy ORDINANCES

Parking On Public Streets

Parking is not allowed on public streets after a snowfall of at least two inches until snow has been plowed to the curb line.

After a snowfall of at least two inches, vehicles in violation are cited by patrolling police. Vehicles found to be obstructing traffic or snow plows, and those still in violation after 24 hours, may be towed. This winter, stay informed of weather forecasts and move your vehicle from the streets whenever snow is in the forecast.

Plow Damage

The City is not liable for damages to obstacles in the road right-of-way (irrigation heads, landscaping, etc). These obstacles should either be removed from the right-of-way or marked clearly so plow drivers can avoid them. Mailboxes are repaired or replaced only if the plow makes direct contact. Sod damage can be reported to Public Works at 763-593-8030. Damages to sod are repaired each spring with black dirt and seed or sod.

Snow Removal From Private Property

Removal of snow and ice from private property to a roadway, across a roadway, or onto a sidewalk or adjacent property is prohibited by City ordinance. Infractions are misdemeanors, subject to fines and prosecution. Snow removed from your driveway or parking lot (whether you do it or hire someone to do it) must be kept off roadways, sidewalks, and adjacent property. If you or your plowing contractor have questions regarding this issue, contact Tom Klatt, Public Works Maintenance Manager, at 763-593-3981.



MEMBERS OF GOLDEN VALLEY'S PUBLIC WORKS STREET MAINTENANCE CREW INSPECT A PLOW BEFORE THE SNOW BEGINS TO FALL.

City Works To Keep Streets Winter-Safe

The National Weather Service has spoken, and it predicts this Minnesota winter will be warmer than usual (though cooler than last year's very warm winter) with about average snowfall. Golden Valley's Public Works Department knows winter can be unpredictable and needs your help to keep streets safe when the big equipment is dispatched to handle whatever the season brings.

Plowing

Golden Valley's Public Works Street Maintenance crew is prepared to handle the City's 120 miles of city streets and 31 miles of sidewalk every time it snows. After snow accumulates to two inches or more and stops falling, the plows head out. To keep traffic moving, crews first focus on main arterial routes and through streets that connect neighborhoods to state and county roads. Plowing stops if strong winds and drifting cause unsafe conditions; it resumes when conditions improve. Public Works always has a mechanic on duty whenever crews are plowing snow.

Sanding

Depending on existing weather conditions, sanding crews use a variation of salt/sand-salt mixture on icy areas. Priority areas are treated first, and all other areas are done when time permits. Priority areas include:

- intersections of City streets and County and State roads, school and pedestrian crossings, bridge decks, and all arterial street stop sign intersections
- street intersections having higher than average traffic volumes, and streets with hills and curves
- all other stop signs and areas deemed hazardous by City crews or Public Safety officials

How You Can Help

Residents can help plow operators by:

- reducing speed and keeping a minimum distance of 50 feet from trucks plowing and spreading sand (frequent backing is necessary, and rear visibility is very limited)
- never driving into a snow cloud or passing vehicles while they're plowing
- staying away from the end of a driveway when a snowplow is approaching
- keeping sleds and toys away from the street when they're not being used
- not building snow forts in the snow piles on the boulevard
- keeping garbage cans and recycle bins in the driveway and off roadways and sidewalks if it snows on collection days

See the articles on pages 8-9 for more information about Golden Valley's winter maintenance procedures. If you have questions about snow plowing or winter safety, call Public Works Street Maintenance Supervisor Lyle Johnson at 763-593-8082, or go to www.ci.golden-valley.mn.us/streets/winterstreets.htm.

Metro

Snow Stats

(Source: National Weather Service)

SEASON	INCHES OF SNOW
2005-06	49.2
2004-05	25.5
2003-04	66.3
2002-03	35
2001-02	66

City Completes 2006 PMP, Plans For 2007

The City of Golden Valley completed its 2006 Pavement Management Program (PMP) in September and continues preparations for the 2007 PMP.

In mid-October Palda & Sons, the City's contractor for the project, finished reconstructing approximately 5.1 miles of local streets in the area west of Sweeney Lake, east of Hwy 100, south of Duluth St, and north of the Union Pacific Railroad tracks.



CREWS PAVE RECONSTRUCTED STREETS IN GOLDEN VALLEY'S 2006 PMP.

Streets were completely reconstructed to City standards, including concrete curb and gutter. The sanitary sewer system was also repaired to help limit the amount of ground water infiltrating the sewer system and minimize the need to excavate the new streets for future repairs.

The City also built a significant amount of storm sewer within the project area. This includes pipe extension to provide adequate drainage following rain and during snow melt, and measures to help protect the water quality in Sweeney Lake. A series of "environmental manholes" will help prevent trash and sediment, as well as the pollutants that attach to the sediment, from entering the lake.

In addition, crews constructed a sidewalk on the north side of Golden Valley Rd from Regent Ave to Lilac Dr (east frontage road) and on the one-block portion of Regent Ave south of Duluth St. This sidewalk will provide safer access to Scheid Park and will connect to the Three Rivers Park District Regional Trail (scheduled for future construction along the railroad tracks south of the project).

COMING UP IN 2007

For 2007 the PMP moves to northeastern Golden Valley, where crews will reconstruct approximately 2.7 miles of local streets and 0.8 miles of Municipal State Aid (MSA) streets (see sidebar for list). The condition of these streets is poor and they currently require significant maintenance. Storm water drainage and water quality is also a concern in the area.

Staff has already begun the preliminary work required for project development (surveying, soil borings, and the neighborhood participation process). The public hearing for the 2007 PMP is set for February 2007, with construction projected to begin in spring. For more information about Golden Valley's PMP, contact Public Works at 763-593-8030. 



2007 PMP Streets

- Bassett Creek Dr (Lee Ave N to Legend Dr)
- Bonnie Lane (Golden Valley Rd to cul-de-sac)
- Dresden Lane (Bassett Creek Dr to cul-de-sac)
- Glenwood Pkwy (Burlington Northern RR to Xerxes Ave N)
- Hampton Rd (Noble Ave N to Lee Ave N)
- Kyle Ave N (27th Ave N to Culver Rd)
- Lee Ave N (cul-de-sac to Culver Rd)
- Lindsay St (Zane Ave N to Lilac Dr W Frontage Rd)*
- Major Ave N (Hampton Rd to Culver Rd)
- Major Circle (Golden Valley Rd to cul-de-sac)
- Olson Memorial Hwy N Frontage Rd (Olson Memorial Hwy to east of Zane Ave)
- Spruce Tr (Noble Ave N—South Segment—to Noble Ave N—North Segment)
- Xerxes Ave N (15th St N to Theodore Wirth Pkwy S Service Rd)
- York Ave N (cul-de-sac to Zephyr Pl)
- Zane Ave N (Olson Memorial Hwy N Frontage Rd to Golden Valley Rd)*
- Zephyr Pl (cul-de-sac to Golden Valley Rd)
- 27th Ave N (Major Ave N to Kyle Ave N)

* Municipal State Aid Street

Golden Valley Road Railroad Bridge Project

At its regular meeting September 5, 2006, the Golden Valley City Council awarded a contract to Shafer Contracting Co, Inc to reconstruct Golden Valley Rd between Douglas Dr and Hwy 100. The project also includes replacement of the Canadian Pacific railroad bridge over Golden Valley Rd. Construction will begin in spring 2007 and is expected to be completed by fall 2007.

The project will reconstruct Golden Valley Rd to City standards with concrete curb and gutter and asphalt pavement. Because of grade changes under the railroad bridge, sanitary sewer and water pipe will be replaced between Zane Ave and Douglas Dr. The City will also do additional storm sewer work throughout the project area. The railroad bridge will be completely demolished and rebuilt with a vertical clearance of 14 feet, 6¾ inches to meet federal highway standards. After construction, no parking will be allowed on the street except on the north side between 5820 Golden Valley Rd and Xenia Ave. If you have questions about the project, contact Public Works at 763-593-8030.

THE DISTRACTED DRIVER FACTOR

The Minnesota Safety Council (MSC) reports that distracted drivers account for 25–50% of all traffic crashes, or between 4,000 and 8,000 crashes a day. It's vital that drivers understand the importance of giving their full attention to the road.

Drivers get distracted for many reasons. The most common are other passengers (especially children), driving a new route or a new vehicle, hauling unsecured cargo, eating, reading, grooming, intense conversations, emotions or distress, and adjusting the radio, navigation system, or other in-vehicle electronics.

Are you a distracted driver? The MSC says you are if:

- a passenger screams or gasps because of something you've done or didn't do
- you run a stop sign or stop light
- you swerve suddenly to avoid a hazard, such as an animal, another vehicle, or debris
- you slam the brakes because you don't see the vehicle in front of you has stopped
- you don't remember driving from one place to another
- you drift from your lane to another

To remedy these distractions, the MSC recommends:

- pre-setting climate control and all electronics before driving
- locating signals, wipers, and lights before driving
- planning routes and grooming in advance
- pulling off the road to make calls and allowing voice mail to handle incoming calls

For more information on road safety, visit the MSC online at www.minnesotasafetycouncil.org.

Minnesota Nice Can Turn Nasty In Traffic Situations

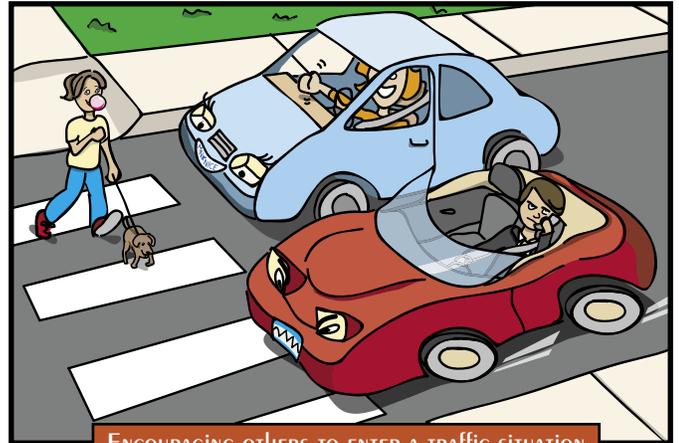
Strange but true—kindness can be harmful, at least in traffic situations, according to the Golden Valley Public Safety Department.

"With the increase in traffic in the metropolitan area, and more bottlenecks developing, people's instinct is to help," says Golden Valley Public Safety Director Bob Hernz. "Most often, people will wave someone into a traffic situation without full comprehension of all the factors involved."

What Hernz is referring to is the dark side of Minnesota nice. Every attentive driver has seen it, and many have engaged in it themselves. One driver motions another driver (pedestrian, bicyclist, etc) into a traffic situation without realizing that other nearby drivers are not being so attentive or courteous. When this happens, the person waved into traffic could be in danger.

This scenario is especially dangerous when children are involved. Children tend to take the direction of adults. So if a driver waves them into a crosswalk, for example, chances are they will do as directed. The problem arises when another driver is unaware of this exchange and proceeds through the crosswalk as usual.

This often plays out on Winnetka Ave and Golden Valley Rd where, Hernz points out, there is a mix of heavy traffic, heavy pedestrian movement, and people coming in and out of businesses.



ENCOURAGING OTHERS TO ENTER A TRAFFIC SITUATION IS OFTEN MORE DANGEROUS THAN HELPFUL.

2005 Crash Facts

Source: MN Department of Public Safety

Yearly

reported crashes: **87,813**
 motor vehicles involved: **161,683**
 people involved: **221,835**
 deaths: **559**
 injuries: **37,686**
 estimated cost to Minnesota economy:
\$1,666,267,000

Daily

crashes: **241**
 deaths: **1.5**
 injuries: **103**
 estimated cost to Minnesota economy: **\$4,565,139**

"My advice to drivers," says Hernz, "is to not encourage others to enter a traffic situation. Leave them to their own good judgement. They may be able to see something that you can't."

"The person trying to be helpful is only focused on the person they are trying to help. They don't see what's going on around them that may be potentially dangerous."

Hernz says it would be acceptable to leave space for another motorist to enter traffic if you are already stopped. But if traffic is moving, do not wait to allow another car in.

"It's certainly not illegal to be nice," Hernz concludes, "but it is potentially hazardous. Directing pedestrians or other motorists as to when and where they may enter can turn politeness into tragedy."

According to Minnesota state statistics, traffic crashes are the number one public health enemy (see sidebar for more information and driving tips). Motorists can help by being attentive and not trying to direct other people on the road.

For more information, visit the Minnesota Department of Public Safety Web site at www.dps.state.mn.us.

Refurbished Basements Are Hot Ticket

Basements are often underappreciated, at least until homeowners seek additional living space. "Basement remodeling is one of the more popular home improvements," says Golden Valley Building Inspector Jerry Frevel. And no wonder, considering the main elements—a ceiling, floor, and walls—are already there. However, the road to remodeling includes planning, permits, work, and inspections.

PLANNING

Many basements have small windows, low ceilings, columns and beams, and, of course, moisture. During initial planning stages, homeowners may want to consider these factors and several others.

First tackle moisture issues, even minor ones. Home improvement professionals who specialize in waterproofing can be a great resource. Residents should also check to ensure their sump pump is not cross connected (connected to the sanitary sewer system). For details about cross connections and how to correct them, go to www.ci.golden-valley.mn.us/streets/sumppumps.htm.

Consulting an architect or designer may be the best way to combine ideas with available space. Whether using a professional or going it alone, maximize basement attributes, such as adding a home theater in a low light area or a bathroom close to pipes and ducts.

For safety purposes, the State building code requires that the sleeping rooms in all basement dwelling units have an emergency egress window. Egress windows must:

- be 20 inches wide and 24 inches high, with a minimum clear openable area of five square feet within 44 inches of grade; otherwise openable area must be 5.7 square feet
- have a finished sill height not more than 44 inches above the finished floor
- have a window well outside of the building if the window opening is below grade

Window wells must:

- be at least 36 inches wide in each direction and have a minimum area of nine square feet
- have a minimum six-inch drop from the window sill to the ground
- include a ladder if the well is more than 44 inches deep

PERMITS AND INSPECTIONS

"When remodeling, the first thing residents should do is call the City," says Frevel. "That way they can get all their questions answered." Residents can also get information on necessary permits. Submit a building permit application, along with two copies of the plans showing layout and materials, to the City Inspections Department (see sidebar for details).

The inspection process ensures that completed work meets national safety standards for plumbing, mechanical, electrical, framing, insulation, and more. Inspections may be necessary during the work, and a final building inspection is always required after work is completed.

For detailed information on basement remodeling permits and building code requirements, visit the City Web site at www.ci.golden-valley.mn.us/citycode/index.htm.



REMODELING FAIR

Golden Valley's annual Home Remodeling Fair is a great place to start your project. Browse home improvement displays, sit in on a few free seminars, talk to contractors and architects, and get your questions answered by City inspectors. Mark your calendar for Sunday, February 25, 2007, then watch the January/February CityNews for more details, or go to www.ci.golden-valley.mn.us/community/RemodelingFair.htm.

KNOW THE CODE

The list of requirements for basement finishing is extensive, so here are a few highlights to get you thinking.

For fire safety, windows are a huge issue in lower level spaces. Basements with habitable space (such as family rooms), and every bedroom, must have at least one egress window or exterior door (see article for more details).

Ceilings in habitable rooms and bedrooms must be at least seven feet high. Beams and headers must be properly sized to provide structural support. The bottom plate of proposed walls must be of approved, treated wood. Foam plastic insulation needs to be protected inside by at least a one-half inch gypsum board. Uncovered walls with exposed fiberglass insulation must be protected by a four-millimeter flame-retardant vapor barrier.

A moisture barrier is required against masonry/concrete foundations from floor to grade. A four-millimeter vapor barrier is also required between the gypsum board and the studs.

To receive a handout with complete building code requirements for lower level finishing, or to speak to an inspector, call the Golden Valley Inspections Department at 763-593-8090.



HAVE A PLAN

Plans must be to one-fourth inch scale and show:

- existing and proposed interior and exterior walls and their construction material; location and size of windows and doors; and existing and proposed plumbing fixtures, furnace, water heater, stairway, fireplaces, and smoke detectors
- name of existing and proposed rooms
- a cross section plan with proposed finished ceiling height; wall, floor, and ceiling materials; and existing and proposed insulation and vapor barrier

Separate permits are required for plumbing, mechanical, and electrical work.

Questions? Contact Golden Valley Inspections at 763-593-8090.



JOIN POLICE IN DRIVE FOR TOYS

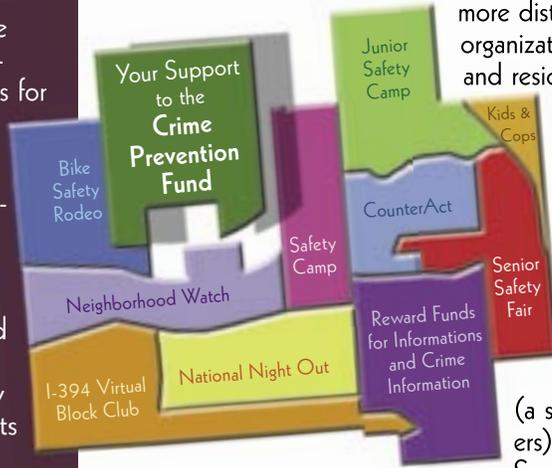
Once again the Golden Valley Police Department (GVPD) offers the community a unique approach to the Toys for Tots donation effort.

For the 12th consecutive year, the GVPD will lead regional law enforcement agencies in a toy drive that culminates in a loud, colorful parade. On the last collection day, police from as many as 20 departments load their cruisers with toys and meet at the GVPD. Then, lights blazing, they caravan to the KARE 11 Toys for Tots drop-off site. In past years the effort garnered thousands of toys.

Between December 1 and 21 (at 3 pm), bring new, unwrapped toys to the GVPD at 7800 Golden Valley Road (open 24 hours a day). Don't forget gifts for older kids and teens. For more information, contact Sergeant Steve Johnson at 763-512-2505.

Support Crime Prevention

Crime prevention is like a puzzle, and the Golden Valley Police Department's community partnerships put the pieces together to keep crime low in Golden Valley. By providing essential financial support for a variety of crime prevention and safety programs, the Golden Valley Crime Prevention Fund makes those puzzle pieces stronger and more distinct. Run by volunteers, this private, nonprofit organization is supported by Golden Valley businesses and residents dedicated to creating and maintaining strong community involvement.



Several of Golden Valley's crime prevention programs are youth oriented, including Safety Camp (a two-day safety education program for second, third, and fourth graders), Junior Safety Camp (day-long safety education for four-, five-, and six-year-olds), CounterACT (a drug and violence prevention program for fifth graders), and Law, Crime, and Safety (a safety and citizenship curriculum for fifth graders). Other crime prevention programs include the Senior Safety Fair, National Night Out, Neighborhood Watch, and the I-394 Virtual Block Club. The Crime Prevention Fund also provides rewards for information in serious criminal cases.

Contributions are the Crime Prevention Fund's only source of revenue. Look at the puzzle and consider how your tax deductible contribution can help our programs be stronger and more vibrant. For more information, call 763-593-8054 or cpfund@ci.golden-valley.mn.us.



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